TRIBEBOOK:

BLACK FURIES™

Legends of the Garou

Unity in Alterity

The alarm goes off at quarter to five. I stretch, then bury my head in my pillow, but realize I don't even have time for a nine-minute snooze reprieve. Dian is still asleep. She'd come in early this morning after a sept meeting, and she was never much of a morning person anyway. When I kiss her cheek, she grimaces sleepily and pulls her pillow over her head. Grinning tiredly, I swing my feet out of bed and onto the cool wood of the floor.

I shower quickly, pull on my scrubs, and grab a few hardboiled eggs for breakfast on my way. The whole pot of coffee goes in a thermos — I've got more than a hundred miles to drive this morning before the clinic opens at eight. I take a few moments to start a fresh pot — something tells me Dian will need it too — and hop behind the wheel of the truck.

• • •

When I wake up in the morning, the sun is up, the birds are chirping their merry little heads off, and Helena is long gone. I'm not even sure when she got up — her side of the bed is cool, and the day is starting to warm up already. It's 9:43. Almost six hours of sleep. Not too bad. I probably should have gotten up earlier, though. I've got business at the sept.

The pot of coffee Helena so thoughtfully left for me has cooked itself down to about five cups. That'll be a good kick in the pants. I splash cold water on my face from the kitchen sink — no sense taking a shower, I'm just going to get filthy again today.

Grabbing my rucksack from the closet, I start packing. My "first aid kit" goes in there — needles threaded with silk to hold the worst messes together, and several yards of bleached muslin to bind up the rest. My nine-volt utility flashlight, after I check the battery — ever since Helena woke up the spirit in it, it draws twice as much power as it used to. Helena says it turns itself on because it doesn't like the dark, and if I didn't leave it in the closet it would be happier. Lunch. Finally, I go back to the bedroom and open the chest at the foot of the bed, reverently lifting out my labrys in its leather and wool wrappings. I ask the forgiveness of the labrys' spirit for the indignity of being carried about upside-down in a pack, promising that it will see use today — and hopefully battle. I shoulder the pack then, and hike off down the road.

• • •

It's been a typical day at the clinic so far. I'm only here for three days every two months. Officially, I'm simply here to keep an eye on the general health of the population, to provide the very basics of care and advice; serious or urgent cases are to be referred to the doctors at the county hospital in

their cold, sterile offices filled with reams of prescription pads. Unofficially, I whisper prayers to aid the healing of bones crudely set at home or send a patient away with a potent herbal remedy for a nagging cough. My Mediterranean coloration has led to rumors among the locals that I'm descended from a long line of Indian medicine women. I haven't bothered to correct that notion — it's a concept they're familiar and comfortable with, and it's close enough to true for my conscience.

Routine checkups run straight into near crises. One minute I'm playing with a six-month-old baby in the guise of testing her reflexes, the next I'm confronted with diabetic Mr. Tucker's gangrenous foot. I clean it as best I can, but it should have been tended to a month ago. I could care for this wound with fire, blade and chant, but old Mr. Tucker will not heal like my sisters do. A surgeon will need to cut away the dead flesh. It is all I can do to clear the poisons from his blood and gain a promise that he will get himself to the emergency room fifty miles away as soon as possible. Another elderly patient provides a test of another sort: Eliza Croft, grandmother and great-grandmother many times over, comes in with a troubling rattle in her chest. She knows she is sick, but she does not wish to leave her home for the hospital. I understand her desires — how could I not? It is the way of our kind to choose a dignified death at the proper time. But underneath this illness I see a spry old woman with many years left to her if she can survive this one, and her large family would sorely miss her wisdom and experience. I explain this to Mrs. Croft and her teary-eyed granddaughter with bluntness and great respect — she has earned no less. It is a decision she will have to make for herself.

The hectic morning fades into a white haze of anger as I walk in to see the first patients on the afternoon schedule. A mother is here with her two children, one year and four years old. I have seen this so many times before, the signs are as obvious as if someone had labeled each scar and bruise with a surgical marker. Cigarette burn, here. Old, deep bruise from a sharp pinch, there. The older boy's face is reddened, small blood vessels reaching spider-like across his cheeks, broken by an unending chain of slaps. Both of them — even the babe in arms! — have that haunted, wary look around their eyes so agonizingly typical of the victims of abuse.

I proceed with a thorough examination of both children, tallying each burn, bruise and scar in my mind as another black mark against the criminal who did this. I need the time that it takes to turn my initial burst of anger into the steely resolve I will need to do my job.

"Did you bring them in today for a general checkup," I ask, "or have you noticed a specific ailment or injury?"

The mother can't look me in the eye. "The girl cries too much. And she don't hold her head up so good." Both children are malnourished, and the little girl is dehydrated as well. I marvel that she has found the strength to continue to cry.

I ask the next necessary question. "Is their father here? Or at home?"

She shakes her head, still looking at the floor. "Haven't seen him for months. He left us." It is the answer I was afraid to hear. I know it is a blindness on my part, but these situations are always so much easier to deal with when there is a man to blame.

I hand the baby back to her, noting the child's reluctance to go back to her mother's arms. I pick up the family's file. Montgomery, Alice; Chad and Alyssa. The name is familiar. I flip through the few charts, and stumble across my own name. I attended Alice Montgomery's second birth, caught her bawling infant as she came into the world. My responsibility here is cemented, now; I have the blood of this woman's womb on my hands.

I put the file down and look closely at the woman. I recognize her face now, but she is changed, so terribly changed from the tearfully joyful woman into whose arms I placed a healthy baby girl. Like the girl in her arms, like the boy in the plastic chair by her side, listlessly kicking at the rungs, she is wan and exhausted. Pained.

Snatching up the folder, I walk to the door. My receptionist for these visits, Carol, sits just outside at a folding table. I ask her to watch the children — and get them a snack, for goodness sake — while I speak privately with their mother. Alice Montgomery looks for a moment as if she will protest, but she does not. I lead her into the small room I have appropriated as my office, and close the door.

• • •

The morning is half gone by the time I hit the bawn. The group waiting for me has probably been there long enough to be ornery by now — good. Babysitting isn't exactly my idea of a good time, either. It doesn't take long to find my three victims, sitting, standing and sulking somewhat near the appointed meeting place in an awkward triangle, none of them willing to get close to the others. I drop to the turf and begin unlacing my hiking boots.

"My name's Dian Axebearer. For today, since we're getting friendly, you can call me Dian, or Axebearer." Now that I have their attention, I tuck my bare feet under my legs and get comfortable. "I

also answer to 'bitch,' but if you get my attention that way you'd better have something important to say." None of them seems to find that funny, under the circumstances.

They are all Cliath, still wet behind the ears from the dunking of their Rites of Passage. And they've all gotten into trouble. The scruffy homid boy with the stained baseball cap is Daniel. He was caught sucking down a cheap 40 while on duty with the Guardian pack. The girl, Raychel, snuck into town against the Warder's orders. She's metis, and even in human shape her lip and nose look like someone hit her in the face with a log, and the sept doesn't want to draw any undue attention from youth services. The last of the bunch, the sulky feral whose dog lips seem frozen mid-snarl, is Sharpbite. He's just a general-purpose pain in the ass. I grin up at the three of them. If the elders think that assigning these kids to me is going to improve their manners or tendency to wise-ass, then I haven't been enough of a pain in the ass myself lately. But maybe I can work on the discipline angle.

"You're all here because the Warder told you to be here, right?" Three nods, in varying degrees. "Did he tell you anything else?" Three shakes of heads, none with much enthusiasm. "I figured as much. Listen, and listen good. We're going hunting." That gets their attention.

"You may remember a few nights back, a traveling pack came through. They said they had seen a large Wyrm beast of some kind in the Umbra in our protectorate, but it gave them the slip when they tried to run it down." They're curious now, and confused. They should be. "A few packs have gone out looking for it, but they haven't found anything. The Warder's not convinced there's anything to find."

I stand up now, continuing my preparations by stripping down to skin, retying just my vest for arms-free movement. The homid kid blushes and looks away; I can't help but grin. "As you kids have undoubtedly been told, packs are important, and have important things to do. You don't. And neither do I, apparently. So you're coming with me on one last shot at finding this thing."

The girl shifts nervously. "Isn't this kind of dangerous?"

"Yep," I cheerfully reply. "You've got fifteen minutes to get your stuff together. And don't think you can get your tribal elders to wiggle you out of this. They all signed you over to me last night."

The boy, Daniel, actually raises a hand to ask a question. He still can't look at my chest. "What are we going to do if we find it?"

Sharpbite growls out an answer before me. "We kill it!" he grates out, whirling on his packmate-for-a-day. "Are you afraid, ape?"

I squat down and pull my double-axe from the rucksack, letting the blood-red cloth fall away from the silvery axe blades. The boys step back involuntarily — they feel the menace of power not meant for their hands. Maybe they aren't as stupid as I thought. "He's right. We're going to kill it. Sharpbite, since you're so keen on showing everyone your balls, you'll be scouting at point. Get moving, the three of you."

• • •

The room is small, dark and a bit dank. A few lockers and a tarnished mirror and sink indicate it was once a changing room, but the lockers, at the moment, are stuffed with file boxes and sheaves of papers. I indicate a plastic chair with some minimal padding to Alice, and take a stool with the door to my back. My attaché is here, with forms and timesheets splayed out across a short bench as a makeshift table. I mumble some words of apology for the sparse surroundings as I gather my papers, covering my distraction as I focus my senses elsewhere, beyond. I find it, that tingle of evil that never fails to send a shudder through my spine. The Wyrm has touched this woman in some way.

I straighten, and look directly at her. "Your children are not healthy, Ms. Montgomery. And they have been hurt. You need to tell me what's going on." She meets my eyes for a moment, then pulls back into her chair sullenly, her eyes staring at nothing but air. Her mouth works soundlessly. Focusing my senses even more acutely, I shift my attention to the mirror behind Alice's head. The Gauntlet parts inside the mirror's frame, and the light of the crescent moon bends out toward me to float the woman's image where the silvery pane once was.

There is a war going on before me. A snaky tendril of violence and blood reaches through the Shadow to wind through Alice Montgomery's soul, anchored by a vicious barb. It tugs at her heart and her gut, sending flares of fear and hate through her frame. It wants her to flee from me, from the bright lights shining on her wounded children, back to the darkness where it can continue to hollow her out from the inside. The spirit of Alice fights back, drawing strength from the gentle glow of a mother's love. She clings to the dingy chair in this shabby room like a life preserver, hoping for help before it is too late. I am her hope.

I want nothing more than to dive through that mirror, feeling my body explode into the very shape of vengeance to rip that evil influence from her soul. But I cannot, not here, not now. There are children here, and the infirm, who would be at risk if the battle spilled

into this world and through the flimsy wooden door. And I do not know what simply tearing out that wicked barb would do to the woman who sits before me. I must do this the hard way. *She* must.

• • •

The moon's light is dim but adequate as we trek through the Shadow to the site where the Wyrmling was last spotted. Then our hunt kicks into gear. We turn over every Umbral rock and leaf, looking for signs of taint and withering. The metis girl Raychel is sensitive, as I'd hoped, and the feral's senses are sharp. Young Daniel is diligent, if terrified.

I know there's something out here. The pack that traveled through were Freebooters — my sisters. If they say they saw something, they saw something. The Warder isn't so easy to convince; he doesn't take advice very well from someone he thinks is a charach, and he covers it up with bullshit about female Ahroun. I called him a misogynist. He called me intransigent. I had to look it up — I never finished high school. He's right, I am. I just hope his own intransigence doesn't get one of these kids killed.

As moonset nears, we turn up Wyrm sign — flecks of black bile pitting the ground. There are no other spirits to be seen, and the air here seems thick and muffles sound. We track it easily from here — it must be large, and very low to the ground. Raychel spots it first, lurking in the dilapidated reflection of an ancient barn. It's large, all right, about the size of a bus. It has no arms or legs, or head that I can see, just a disgusting bladder of a body that pulses black and violet and red like a fresh bruise. Dozens of wicked-looking black whips spin out of its form, some thinning and stretched into the distance, others hovering around like angry hornets with stingers like arrowheads. I don't think it's seen us yet, but I can't be sure since I can't see eyes.

I pull back, motioning for the other three to follow me. With my sisters by my side, we could simply fall on this bloated monster and carve it to pieces in a celebratory fashion. With these kids in my care, some smarter fighting is in order. Daniel and Raychel pull back with me, the only sound the cracking and rustling of bones shifting and knitting upward into Crinos, ready for battle. I look back — Sharpbite hasn't moved, every sense riveted on the mesmerizing weaving of those evil tentacles. I *hsst* softly to get his attention. As he looks back in the fading light, I can see the blood in his eyes. Then he's gone, sprinting toward the creature as fast as four legs can carry him. At least he has the sense to hold his howl of fury until he's almost on top of the Bane.

I have no choice. "Follow me!" I bark at the two at my heels, and race down to join the fray.

• • •

I begin preparations slowly, as stealthily as I can to avoid attracting the Wyrm creature's attention. I pour the remaining coffee from the thermos into its lid, and hand it to her. It's not a chalice, but the symbolism of the shape is more important than its lack of decoration, and its warmth may help fight off the tendril's icy touch. From the side pockets of my bag I bring out nine candles — three white for the Maid, three green for the Mother, and three black for the Crone — and begin to place them in a circle around Alice, whispering invocations as I go. In the mirror, I see the tendril begin to writhe in unease. It senses, somehow, the growing opposition. I pray we do not set the storage room aflame.

The candles, each flame burning straight and hot in response to my fervent request, create a warm sanctuary in the middle of the room, pushing the dankness away. Trusting that the sprinkler system in this building is as ancient as the rest of the structure, I light a smudge of incense and carry it around the circle before placing it at Alice's feet. This is the best I can prepare here and now. It has to be enough.

• • •

With his head start and four legs, Sharpbite reaches the Bane way before the rest of us. He slams into it with the full force of his Hispo charge and immediately sets to ripping out huge gobbets that shake like blood Jell-O when they hit the ground. It does not bleed or quiver with pain — the only evidence that the creature cares about its missing pieces is its immediate counter-attack. Sharpbite is quickly under assault by a dozen or more barbed whips, and it is soon plain that the pointy end isn't the only problem. The whips tear away fur with a first strike, exposed skin on the next. With enough time it looks like they could clean down to the bone. It won't get that much time.

We're almost there. In seconds, I'll be able to cut away the lashes harrying the stupid feral and we can try this again. The seconds are not enough. I see the strike — a barb raised high in the air, flashing downward like the lunge of a cobra. The barb pierces right between Sharpbite's shoulder blades and keeps going in while the blackness wraps around his head and neck. With a howl of pure panic, he turns and bolts from the fight, trailing blackness behind him.

• • •

I step into the circle and kneel at the woman's feet, and place my hands around hers on the cup. Her body spasms as the creeping blackness wills her away from my touch, but her hands hold steady within mine. Slowly, she looks up from the cup to my face. Now I can see the foreign darkness behind her eyes as it gathers

itself to fight. I try to pin it with my stare, but it is too slippery for that.

"Tell me about your children." My tone is gentle yet demanding. She shrinks back, denial flooding through her face and pooling in her open mouth. "No!" I command. Not that. There is time enough later for admissions of guilt and shame. "Talk to me about your children. Tell me why you love them."

• • •

Battle is joined, and we're already one warrior down. The thing's body is unarmored and soft, and actually really fun to rip apart, but the constant belt-sander assault of the whips takes the joy out of it. I fend the attacks off with sweeps of my axe and tear at the Wyrmling with claws and teeth, but the kids, unarmed, aren't faring so well. Already their hands are ripped raw from blocking the strikes, and every other part of them is bleeding where they've failed. This thing doesn't bleed or ooze or suffer one bit from the damage we're doing. There's got to be a vital spot somewhere.

• • •

Each word is a struggle for her, as she hunts for emotions that have been wrenched away and buried beneath piles of spiritual excrement. "Chad. He chases grasshoppers through the front yard. Not caught one yet." Seconds, perhaps minutes pass. "He sleeps…when he sleeps, he puts both arms up over his head. Like angel wings."

"And your daughter?" I prompt. In the mirror behind Alice, I see the appendage whipping back and forth, trying to smother the memories that are beginning to well up through the cracks. It fails; she finds more. "Alyssa…she would reach up and pat my cheek while she nursed. She has curls — little curls of hair that get loose and tickle the inside of her ear."

• • •

This fight is not going well. I told both of the Cliath to stay by my side. In a fighting wedge we could carve our way into this Wyrmling, each shielded from attack by the others, until we found some vital part to rip out of it. But the only tactic these whelps know is the most basic, instinctive wolfpack maneuver — attack from the flank and the rear. Well, this thing doesn't have a flank or a rear to nip and claw, and this bloated thing is cunningly herding them further from me with its lashes and needlings. I won't have time to get to them both. Cursing, I make the choice to continue to fight into this thing, to find its heart and rip it out before it kills one of them — before it kills us all.

• • •

Time passes. I cannot guess how long, but all I can do is provide the comfort of another woman's presence as Alice reclaims her children, rebuilding the image of them in her mind from the pieces she steals back from the Bane. With every whispered memory she adds, the thing grows visibly weaker, mistier, but its pulsing colors still carry the promise of violence. Finally, the thing quivers and slumps loosely around the increasing glow of the woman's spirit, still anchored by its barbed tail.

• • •

There's a sudden break in the barrage of whips and spearing barbs, like the Bane has lost its taste for this fight. I can't imagine why — it's got us pretty well on the ropes. Dashing blood from my eyes, I try to spot the kids I dragged into this battle. Daniel has been speared and wrapped in blackness. He's flailing, so overwhelmed with terror that his blows fall on empty air as he saws away at his own flesh. It's got Raychel, too, but she's sunk to the ground, listless and cowed, as the barbs pick away at her skin. The tentacles piercing them writhe with putrid colors, and I finally get it — it manipulates emotion. I won't see these kids die without a fight. But the crescent moon, now almost gone, makes it hard to tap the Rage I need. Cursing Gaia's enemy — as good as a prayer here on the battlefield — I carve into the beast again while I get this chance.

• • •

"Listen to me, Alice." I snap her back from her reverie. She must finish this now, before the creature regains its strength. "You remember when Alyssa was born? The pain, the pushing?" She nods, stronger now, but frightened by my questions. "This will hurt far more than that, Alice, because what's inside you now is something that should not be there. But you can do it, you are strong enough. Push it out, Alice."

On some level, she understands me. The same part of her that sensed the wrongness and looked for help takes command and struggles against the barb in her soul. With one last tremendous push and a victorious cry, Alice forces the barb out. As I watch in the mirror, the tendril whips backward into the darkness, recalled to whatever evil spawned it. All that is left is Alice, bloodied and raw. Newborn.

• • •

All of a sudden, the bloated thing finds its will to fight again. Something has seriously pissed it off — anger literally rises from the beast like spores from a kicked toadstool. Blows rain in from all sides. There's no safe retreat, even if I'd take one. Out of the corner of my eye, I see the barb coming in to spear and not slash; it's every warrior's nightmare, the strike coming that you know you can't block in time. I have just

enough time to wonder what this Wyrmling has saved up for me.

Then the wave hits. It's staggering for a moment — an emotion I haven't felt for so long that it takes a moment to realize what it is. Helplessness. This thing doesn't know the Furies very well. My response is not resignation, but anger — pure Rage that finally spills over to fill me with new strength. My axe comes alive in my hands, and I fight without thought but with fierce joy.

• • •

I hold her as she cries, her tears a mixture of relief and anguish. She knows what she has done. The wounds to her and her children will take a long, long time to heal. "I know a place you can go, Alice. People who can help. They won't take your children from you there."

She will go, I know, and my people can help her learn again how to be a mother. Perhaps she will even learn to share her strength with others, and join the fight. I can hope. I was lucky to find her now, before the damage was too deep. Before her children were infected with hate and violence, with no supernatural menace to fight off and make it all better. It feels good to face the enemy, and win.

• • •

I come to in the darkness of the Shadow at dawn. A light bobs somewhere nearby. It comes closer, then shines right in my eyes. I scowl; my flashlight dims apologetically. Raychel is hovering over me, looking like nothing more than a walking scab. At least she's upright. There's a heavy weight on me. Dead weight. I'd grin, but I think my lips are gone. "Daniel?" I ask her.

She points. "Alive. But hurt bad."

My axe is still in my hand. I can turn it enough to get the edge into something, then it slides with through the blackened, rubbery flesh that buries me. I hand it up to Raychel. "Here. Cut me out." She takes the labrys gingerly by the leather-wrapped haft. She can't grin right now either, but I can see the gleam in her eye. "Feels good, doesn't it?" She nods, and begins cutting away with sure strokes.

I get free and have Daniel wrapped up like a mummy by the time Sharpbite slinks back. His ears are back, tail down. He's expecting a rebuke, and Goddess

knows he deserves it. "You ran. Do you know why that happened?" I ask. He clearly does not. "It jerked around emotions. Human emotions. The kind of emotions you like to pretend you don't have. Get more used to your two-legs, and maybe next time you won't run on four."

He flinches back, then rises up to Crinos and makes to pick up Daniel. Ferals are always so damn literal. I wince and stand up. "No, let me do that. I'm beat, so's Raychel. We're counting on you to find us a safe way home." He slowly shrinks back down to wolf size, but his tail is back up. We stumble home by flashlight.

• • •

I'm at home cooking dinner when a car pulls up. I hear Dian's footsteps on the porch. It's usually a bad sign when she accepts a ride home, and sure enough, she comes in all beat up. I'm at her side in a heartbeat, but she slaps my hands away. "I'm fine," she says. "The healers at the sept can tie a bandage just as well as you can, y'know."

She lays her axe gently on the table, drops her sack to the floor, and goes back to the porch to pull the steaks from the grill. "Those aren't anywhere near done," I say.

She snorts. "Like that matters." So much for cooking dinner.

We're both starving. The steaks disappear, along with a loaf of crusty bread for mopping up the blood and juices. "You don't have to be back at the caern tonight?" Dian shakes her head. "I need to get to sleep. I've got an early day again tomorrow." She slides from her chair and holds out her hand. It's warm beneath the bandages, like always, as we make our way up the stairs.

• • •

I give in and ask Helena to take a look at my wounds before we sleep. I lied, earlier. Her touch is far more gentle and her hands far more skilled with a needle than anyone else. "How am I gonna show off without battle scars?" I growl.

She laughs. "How am I going to show off if you have them?" She hums as she fixes up some hasty sutures.

"You had a pretty good day today, didn't you?" I ask.

Helena nods with a bright smile. "I got into a fight today. In a way. Do you want to hear about it?"

"I'd love to," I answer, but a yawn comes that I can't stifle as I settle onto her shoulder. "Could you tell me tomorrow?"

She pulls the covers up and finds an undamaged spot of my forehead to kiss. Sleep comes quickly.

TRIBEBOOK:

BLACK FURIES™

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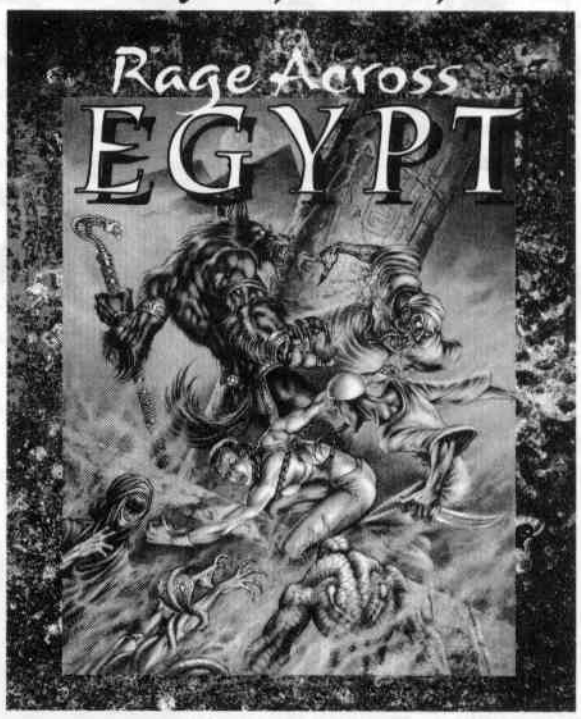

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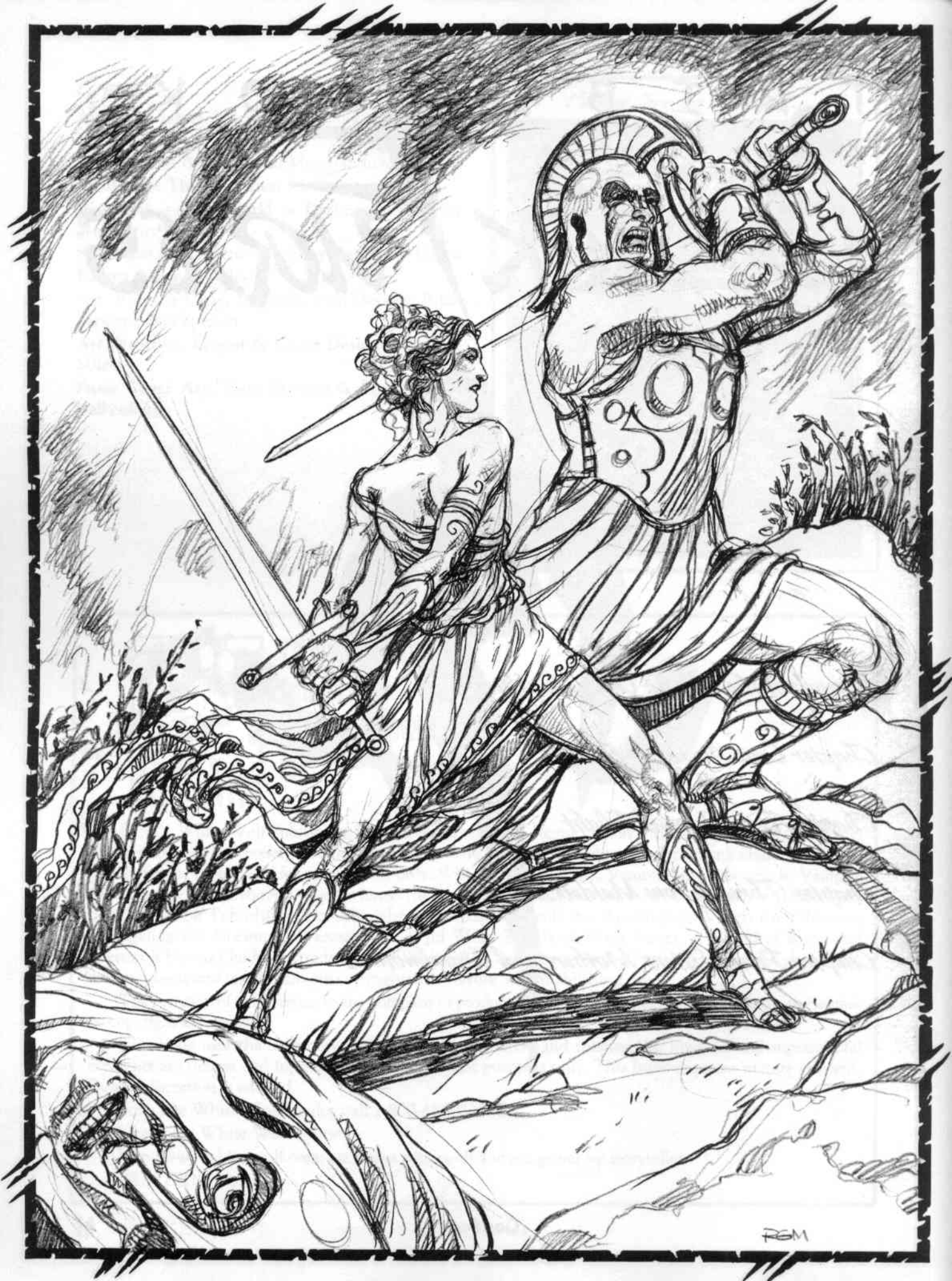
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Chapter One: Avenging Claws

Gods of the younger generation, you have ridden down
the laws of the elder time, torn them out of my hands.
— Chorus, from the *Eumenides*

I should preface this text with an explanation. We don't write down our legends like this. I mean the Black Furies when I say "we," not the Garou — I'm sure the Glass Walkers probably have websites or some damned thing, and I don't doubt that the Get of Fenris and Fianna claim to have 3,000-year-old runestones chronicling their tribal lays. We don't, though. We hold fast to the Wyld when we can, and we eschew the Weaver and his works whenever we can.

I'm sorry, this text may be a little disjointed. I have a lot to say. So, while I'm off on a side note: we revile the Weaver, but we don't all prefer that term for him. "Spider," maybe, or "Namer." Weaving is good work. The Fates are weavers. What the Namer does isn't weaving. It's calcification.

And remember, cub, or whoever reads this, that the rest of the Garou Nation doesn't think of the Weaver — or the Namer, or whatever — as male. After all, weaving is good women's work, so they think of the Weaver as a woman. I think we all know that the Triat is beyond gender, but hereinafter *I* am going to refer to it as a male. The Weaver doesn't create, it doesn't give birth. It has no right to any claim on our gender.

Back to the subject of writing. Pure thought is wordless. It comes out of the Wyld. Ask an infant sometime, or a wolf. Oh! You can't: The Namer long ago forced all of our communication into language and words, and as he did that, he forced our *minds* into a shape that only thought in language and words. Now, we need language, and I suppose we should be thankful to the Namer for it in some fashion. But it is still his.

And if spoken language may be a thing of the Namer, written language is undoubtedly his. Once again, it may be useful, and it may even be necessary, but in some small sense it is the tool of our enemy. Spoken words are airy; they are temporary. Songs and story can live on the wind and in your mind, and if you die, no enemy can steal them. In committing our most sacred legends to writing, many fear that they an echo of them will reach the Namer.

However, the Apocalypse is almost upon us. We die, faster than we can replenish our own numbers. Ancient legends, stories, and rituals vanish as we do. Though I flee the wrath of some of the eldest crones of our tribe in doing so, I put our history into written form now. But let the reader beware. To appease the strong right arms of some of those crones, I have agreed to sprinkle this text with half-truths, omissions, and outright lies. If you are a Black Fury and you want the truth of something you read here, ask one of your sisters. If you are not, I suggest you tread lightly to a Black Fury packmate or close friend, and

couch your question as respectfully as you can manage. The tales below are not for all Garou.

These legends might bear little resemblance to the history of the world you got from the idiot standing up in front of your classroom as a child — if in fact you had the misfortune to be raised in their schools and the patience to sit quietly and take your learning from their books and teachers. Remember this: the Weaver has written one history of the world, and given it names and dates and worshippers. I do not speak of that history. I speak of the truth.

The Earliest Days

Gaia, the Great Mother, the progenitor of us all, created the Black Furies in the earliest days, after the creation of the world and the madness of the Namer and Wyrm. You know this story, I'm certain: the two youngest of the Mother's triplets twisted into madness during their youth, and have never quite returned to sanity. Unable to feast adequately upon each other, the Namer and Wyrm turned to their Mother, who was vast and all-encompassing, and, with Her loyal eldest child's help, spawned new life every day. The Namer and Wyrm took to fighting over that new life and over the Mother's flesh; the Wyrm tore great rents in Her flesh as the Namer paralyzed and calcified Gaia's limbs. These wounds eventually drove Gaia unconscious. She continued to give birth, even unconscious: great Incarnae like Phoenix and Luna emerged from Her flanks, and looked with horror upon their elder siblings' depredations.

It was Luna — whom we also call Artemis — who spied the Garou on Gaia's body. They did not instinctively understand their role, in those days, and since these times predate the creation of mankind or wolves, the shapes they wore were confusing and misunderstood. The Garou thought of themselves as creatures solely of the Wyld, changelings. Luna gently knelt down and took the First Pack under her wing, teaching them of Gaia and their true role as the Mother's defenders. Soon there were many packs of Garou, and Luna made certain each pack had a role.

In many ways, the first pack of Furies — the Gorgons, or Medusae — was nothing more than Gaia's unconscious hand. If something on Her skin irritated Her, the Gorgons scratched it. But we were more than that, too; the Gorgons were all females, and they understood the essential connection between Woman and the Goddess better than any male or mixed pack could.

The first five Black Furies represented each of the Garou auspices. The oldest of them was the New Moon, Euryale, who was openly contemptuous of Man, calling him the weaker sex and demanding that he be subjugated to serve Woman. Her younger sister was Helena, the Theurge, who knew that subjugating Man would only lead to his rebellion and Woman's eventual downfall. Stheno, the half-moon of the pack, was a mediator and leader by her nature; her sisters called her "Mother" only half-jokingly, as all respected her wisdom. Medusa, the Artisan, invoked terrible songs of battle when the pack engaged the forces of the Wyrm, and her Rage was terrible to behold. The youngest and most beautiful of the Gorgons was Isthmene, the Ahroun, who wielded a labrys beaten from pure silver and was death to any who dared raise a hand against her.

Our great-grandmothers and their tribe settled in the lands around the Aegean Sea. In those days, the tribe's totem spirit was Luna herself, in her guise as Artemis — this would change later, as the number of Garou grew so large that Luna could not spend her time tending to just one tribe's welfare. The young

Another Story

The Galliard Elizabeth Sharpaxe tells the tale of creation somewhat differently:

"It is said that in the beginning, Gaia created all things that live upon the Earth. She created Man, She created Wolf; She created the Garou half-Man, half-Wolf to walk between the worlds and to be Her guardians. These things are true, but they are not our story.

"Gaia's creations spread over the Earth and lived their lives. As She reclined to listen, Her ears filled with the sounds of life as She had dictated it must be: the wails of the newborn, the low mutter of daily existence, the cries of the dying. Then a new sound reached Her above the din of creation, a sound that made Gaia shudder with anger. These were the screams of the slain — not those who died at the fullness of their days, but those cut down by the hand or claw of their kin, those who should provide comfort and protection. As fathers devoured children and sons slew mothers, the spirits of the dead cried out to Gaia, and Gaia heard.

"We are Gaia's answer. From the soil of Her Earth She formed us, from ground stained red by the blood of the murdered. She created us female, every one; She made us bearers of life so that we might never take life thoughtlessly. She gave us fur as black as night, so that the wicked might fear our righteous wrath. She gave unto us a charge: to hunt the kinslayers and other profaners of nature, and so to protect our Mother.

"We are the daughters of Gaia, born of Her body and of blood. We are vengeance. We are the Black Furies."

Black Furies nurtured the Wyld places in their territory, battled Wyrm and Weaver spirits, occasionally had spats with other tribes, and lived otherwise peaceful lives devoted to Gaia.

Finally, though, an interloper arrived, wearing the sometime skins of the Garou.

Prehistory

The simple truth of human existence is that Man has never understood Woman. Consider the very earliest days of human awareness, say, a year after Gaia created both. Man has a straightforward life. He wakes up, he hunts, he kills, he brings home part of the kill to his woman, they eat, the sun goes down, they go to bed, they fuck — because, while Man and Woman might not know *why* sex is fun, it *is* fun — and then they sleep.

Woman's life is much more complex, right from the beginning; she obeys mysterious forces and urges, and often behaves in ways Man does not understand. With the phase of the moon she bleeds, and the blood brings changes in personality — Man calls it irrationality.

Then one day Woman stops bleeding, and grows large, and eventually a child forces its way out between her thighs. This is a violent, painful process for Woman; not every woman survives childbirth in the first days. Imagine the shock of the first man to discover that "his" woman has created a new child, as if by magic! Woman has *power*. Her womb is a dark and dangerous place, yet Man is drawn back to it by emotions he cannot control or understand. And that womb can create *life itself*. Throughout nature, there is no obvious cause for the creation of life, other than the turning of seasons: in spring and summer animals and plants are plentiful, and in fall and winter they are harder to find. A woman might give birth in any season, and in another year it could well happen again.

Some time passes before Man and Woman realize that sex and childbirth are related. Maybe it takes place when humans first domesticate animals and notice that females kept separate from males never give birth; maybe some kind-hearted Bone Gnawer or Child of Gaia explains what's up. Certainly *we* wouldn't have given that secret up, at least not to Man. We might have passed it along to Woman, but of course, human women might well tell their men the secret in a weak moment. We'll never know for sure.

Unfortunately, once Man learns of the connection between sex and childbirth, he makes a couple of quick calculations until he arrives at answers he likes. Man has just learned how to domesticate animals, and he knows how to farm a plot of land that he's claimed as his own. Ownership of

property is an attractive and novel idea to him. If Woman can't have the child without him first having sex with her, then, Man figures, the child must be his property. You can see where this is going. If Woman is rolling around with lots of men, Man can't be sure a given child is his. So he'd better make sure to keep Woman under lock and key, so that she can only have sex with him and his property rights are carefully controlled.

Such kidnapping and rape — for that is what it must have been, in those earliest days — caught the attention of the ancient Black Furies. This activity clearly violated the balance that Gaia created between Man and Woman, and it was an outrage that we could not tolerate.

Thus, we perversely believe, began the Impergium. No other tribe, except perhaps the Red Talons, will lay claim to having begun the Impergium. We won't shout it from the rooftops; this secret is not for the other tribes, but rather only for the Black Furies. Our ancestors knew they could not stop the spread of this concept — that the child and woman belong to the man, as a shovel does. But we could certainly exact vengeance on behalf of the women, trapped in a system they did not ask for. The vengeance that we brought inspired the ancients' myths of the Furies, vicious wild women that slew those who violated the gods' laws.

During the Impergium, some human tribes migrated far away from our homeland between the Aegean and Black Seas; over time, they moved literally thousands of miles away. This wandering stems from the Wyld urge in humans: spread out, make new things. It is also the Weaver urge: discover, name, plunder. Many tribes of Garou left with the wanderers: Get of Fenris to the north, Fianna to the west, Shadow Lords to the east, and Silent Striders to the south. Three tribes in particular left with the furthest-ranging tribes: the wards of Turtle, the children of the cannibal winter spirit Wendigo, and the followers of the water-serpent Uktena. We would not hear from those three for thousands of years.

The men never really figured out why we had such anger for them, and eventually the other tribes convinced the Black Furies to lay down their labryses and join them in ending the Impergium. Some of our aunts and grandmothers refused to do so; these women are the progenitors of the camp we call the Bacchantes today.

With the end of the Impergium, human population boomed, and the apes wrapped themselves in tools of the Namer to protect themselves from the unpredictable power of Gaia. We didn't realize, back then, that the Namer would be as much a foe as the Wyrm, for his power was more subtle than the great serpent's.

Early humans may not have understood the divisions of the spirit world, but they still understood that the Mother Goddess was the most worthy of worship. Those humans had particular reverence for the Mother's dark places, Her womb.

Chthonic earth-goddess worship can be seen in myths and legends throughout the world. From the Hittites' Lelwani, goddess of the underworld, to the Babylonian Ishtar, the goddess of fertility and sexuality, human myth reflects the male half of the race's inability to cope with the primal nature of women. Caverns, tunnels, and tombs in the Earth all echo humans' mystification regarding their personal origins; humans' early obsession with these places shows a desire to return to fertile Mother Gaia's womb, as well.

Humans were not alone in this: the Wyrm and Namer, too, wished to return to their loving Mother's womb. Lacking procreative abilities of their own, both obsess with Gaia's living children and Her fertility. Why else, after all, would we encounter the most dangerous creatures to spawn from both those monsters buried deep within the earth, as Thunderwyrms or worse things?

Fatherhood and the Patriarch

In ancient days the most obvious link between any human and her family's past came through the mother. The mother *was* the family's past, as far as most children were concerned. The concept of patriarchy — fatherhood — complicated that situation. Freud had a pretty good idea of what was going on, back a century ago: the father is the first person to come between the mother and infant; he is the primary competition for the mother's affection. The father loused up a pretty simple system of descent, from mother to daughters.

The Patriarch — the spirit that personifies this interloper, and later grows so strong — first intruded on human affairs at this point in history. Unlike many of my sisters, I don't think of the Patriarch as an unrelenting force of darkness and evil. The *anima* and *animus* should be equal, and I have no problem with a Patriarch that is equal in humans' minds to a Goddess. The problem is that the two aren't equal in most humans' lives.

The Patriarch is not the Weaver: don't listen to anyone who tells you otherwise, as they obviously weren't listening as a child. The Patriarch also isn't necessarily the Judeo-Christian God, though he might be. There is no question that he has affected both of those spirits, and in turn been affected by human and Garou perceptions of each. But he is a separate entity — if in fact the sky-God of the Jews, Muslims, and Christians exists.

Greece

The Titans, the progenitors of the Greek pantheon of gods, were all nearly perfect beings: they sprang from the marriage of earth and sky, literally, Gaia and Uranus (probably some personification of the Patriarch spirit, or maybe the Namer himself, I don't know — you have no idea how much of this stuff I'm making up as I go). Uranus then sentenced his offspring to imprisonment underground (Underground! He stuffed them back into the womb! The classic desire of the male when faced with an unexpected or unwanted pregnancy or childbirth!). When they freed themselves, their eldest brother, Cronus, took charge.

The Greeks don't talk much about the times when Cronus ruled the Titans and they strode over humanity. Our legends — which tell us that the Titans were either exceptionally powerful humans, or powerful spirits manifest in the Realm — speak of the Titans' Age as a time of peace and prosperity. Composed as they were of a perfect balance between male and female, sky and earth, the Titans created beauty and joy for all their worshippers. The Black Furies lived in peace and accord with the Titans and their people; Cronus's family knew Gaia's laws as well as we did, and we rarely came into conflict with the Titans when we had to perform our sacred duties.

Eventually Cronus's son Zeus, a sky-god, rose up in rebellion against him, and Zeus and his siblings cast all the Titans into a deep pit in the underworld (Again with the underworld! The Greeks had *issues*). The sky-gods of the Greeks took up residence on a high mountaintop and ruled their human charges from there. As with the Titans, our legendry does not indicate whether the Olympians were powerful humans, Incarnae, or other beings — I believe them to have been Incarnae, myself, but many of my sisters speak of them as powerful wizards. We had no love for the family of Zeus — and events surrounding Clytemnestra's death did not endear them to us — but Luna herself walked among them in the guise of Artemis. She often spoke on our behalf before the Olympians.

Avenging Clytemnestra

Go read the *Oresteia*. Come back here when you're done. Oh, for the love of the Goddess, is the library that far away?

All right. Here's the ten-cent version: The Greeks feel like they need to sack Troy to take back Helen, who ran off with Paris. He was a man, not a city. Kids these days. They pile into their boats, but there is no wind — and, I guess, they don't have suitable oars or anything. They hang around there for a long while, waiting for a good wind, but nothing happens. Finally, Calchas, one of Agamemnon's wise men, sees an omen of some sort that apparently means the navy needs to make a sacrifice to Artemis. Agamemnon, who leads the navy, decides that the most appropriate sacrifice would be his daughter, Iphigeneia. I don't know why he reaches this conclusion. We'll talk more about that later.

So, Agamemnon kills Iphigeneia, sacrifices her to Artemis. Lo and behold, we have wind. The ships sail for Troy. There's a titanic struggle at Troy. After more than a decade, the Trojans fall for the old Trojan Horse gambit, which I suppose wasn't that old a gambit at the time, and the city falls. The Greeks do some damage. Agamemnon returns home, and Clytemnestra (his wife and Iphigeneia's mother) is rightfully ticked off about her daughter's sacrifice, even ten years later. With the help of her lover, Clytemnestra kills Agamemnon.

Okay, so far we're even: dead daughter, dead father. Good. But then Orestes gets involved. He is Iphigeneia's brother, and he's very angry with Clytemnestra, who, as he sees it, killed Agamemnon so that she could continue to carry on with her lover. He kills Clytemnestra.

This is where we make our cameo in Greek history. The Furies wander onstage at this point, to punish Orestes for the crime of matricide. Our warriors chase him across the Aegean for a while, until he turns himself in, in Athens, to stand trial for his crime. Athena — a sky-goddess if ever there was one — casts the deciding vote to spare Orestes' life. To mollify the Furies, they are given a permanent position administering justice in Athens, and become known as the Eumenides, the "kindly ones."

There's Aeschylus' version of what happened. Here's what really took place:

Agamemnon's man saw an omen, a warning from Luna — Artemis — about the dangers that might await him. The people of Troy had allies among the Garou and human sorcerers, and Luna knew that Agamemnon would somehow become wrapped up in the fate of the prophetess Cassandra. As Agamemnon was generally a just and wise king, Luna had some affection for him, and wished to spare him the pain of war and its aftermath.

Agamemnon didn't have to sacrifice Iphigeneia. His wise man misunderstood the omen Artemis provided — not surprising, given the masculine separation from the natural world and its symbology. However, Agamemnon was impatient to sail on Troy, and when his counsel suggests that a suitable sacrifice might be in order, he marched to his own home, wrenched his daughter from her mother, and sacrificed her life to his own need for war.

Most of the rest of the story is accurate as we see it. Agamemnon sailed for Troy, fought there for ten years, and eventually returned home, with Cassandra in tow.

Cassandra warned Agamemnon that he was in grave danger, but he ignored her, and regretted that when Clytemnestra killed him. Orestes found out what Clytemnestra had done and killed her. This matricide caught the attention of the Black Furies, and we chased Orestes through the Aegean until he threw himself on the mercy of Athens.

I'd like to make a snarky side comment about Athena here. Now, I know there are plenty of Black Furies who revere Athena, the wise mistress of war and crafts, but frankly I can't believe they bother. Look: she's a sky goddess — her symbol is the Owl — and not only does she reject sex in all its forms, but she *sprang* from the *head* of her *father*! How's *that* for rejecting everything important about the Goddess? It gives me pain to dwell upon this, so I'll get back to my topic.

The Furies finally hounded Orestes to Athens, where he threw himself on the mercy of the courts. In those days, spirits consorted more openly with mortal men and women, and the legends say that the Incarna Athena sat in judgment over Orestes. I'm not sure the legends are right; I don't know anyone who can channel the ancestor-spirits of the Garou that were there, so I can't easily verify the stories. So Athena might not have been an Incarna; she may have been a wise woman of the city, or a wizard, or — I find this prospect charming — a vampire. Regardless, Athena cast the deciding vote to spare Orestes' life, after the other judges were evenly split. The *Oresteia* says that she did so because the father's life is worth more than the mother's, and so Orestes was justified in killing his mother to avenge his father. Given my general opinion of Athena, this doesn't surprise me, but again, I have no way to verify her reasoning. I'm only certain that Orestes survived.

In response to this outrage, a pack of Furies — one of those most outraged by the survival of Orestes — seized a role in administering justice in Athens for nigh on a century. The authorities in Athens didn't have much of a choice about this: our sisters proclaimed, at the end of Orestes' trial, that they no longer trusted the Athenians to mete out justice fairly and intelligently. For a pristine century, wifebeaters, rapists, and other criminals against women and Gaia found their justice in tooth and claw. Our tribal epics speak wistfully of this time, one not matched since. Eventually, however, other battles grew prominent in our grandmothers' eyes, and they drifted away from Athens.

Oh, the humans did call our sisters "The Kindly Ones," in Athens. But they did it for the same reason others called the fae the "Fair Folk." They were rightfully terrified of our wrath.

Bellerophon and Pegasus

You may recall my mentioning that for a long while Artemis herself was the totem spirit of the Black Furies. The surviving spirits of the First Daughters, the Gorgons, aided her — save for Medusa, who had not yet fallen victim to age. Yes, I am aware that this suggests that Medusa lived for thousands of years. I don't pretend that the ancient Furies were the relatively frail creatures that we are today. Perhaps you could entreat a Theurge to help you take this up with Medusa herself, should you disagree with thousands of years of oral tradition. You might have some difficulties with that...but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Artemis' involvement with the Black Furies changed with the death of Medusa, the last surviving Gorgon. No longer could Artemis claim to be able to spend the necessary resources on tending to our tribe's needs. No, from Medusa's corpse, Artemis coaxed Pegasus into existence, to act as a surrogate parent for the Black Fury tribe.

Athena, envious of Artemis, sent her pawn Bellerophon to familiarize Pegasus with the physical realm and the Furies' homeland. Bellerophon took a dominant position over Pegasus — something the adult Pegasus might never allow, but which the child-spirit had no way to avoid. Bellerophon rode the sleek, black, winged horse through the skies over the Aegean and Black Seas for days at a time. Bellerophon's own conflict with the Red Talons brought Pegasus into battle against Chimera, and Fury against Talon in support.

Over time, though, Pegasus realized that Bellerophon was a glory-hound, with his own gratification far outranking Pegasus's education or the causes of the Black Furies or indeed Gaia Herself in importance. Our totem began to rebel against his rider, first subtly, and then more openly, trying to throw the Greek while the two flew over the Straits of Bosporus. Bellerophon attributed this "misbehavior" as a sign that Pegasus had become too strong-willed as an adult stallion, and he took a typical human response: he gelded the great horse.

This enraged Pegasus, but he bided his time until the injury had healed; the next time that Bellerophon took Pegasus to the skies, Pegasus did throw the man to his death, before returning to a Black Fury caern and declaring that never again would he — or they — bend the knee to a human male. To the Furies' surprise, however, Pegasus also decreed that the Furies should cease to slaughter their male metis, instead insisting that they be given a place in the tribe in accordance with their proud heritage and Fury bloodline.

Pegasus: He, She, or It?

It seems odd that the Black Furies, a tribe so powerfully aware of the spiritual ramifications of sexuality and gender roles, follow a tribal totem whose gender is often called into question. Sometimes werewolves call Pegasus "he," sometimes "she," sometimes "it"; this is true of all Garou who follow Pegasus, not just the Furies.

The story of Bellerophon "gelding" Pegasus is a popular one among the Furies, as it implies that Pegasus has no sexual identity because "he" cannot. It certainly might be true. However, the totem's lack of a clear gender also gives it a unique role among its favored tribe; it is neither father nor mother, and thus can act as patron without invoking either of these archetypes. Given the amount of importance Black Furies associate with the roles of father and mother, this is probably for the best, as Pegasus can aid its favored tribe without usurping a role that it doesn't quite deserve.

Biblical Times

It's hard for me to justify wasting breath on the Black Furies' activities in the times and places described in the Jewish and Christian bibles, but I figure I ought to give you some ammunition in case you bump into a bible-thumper with the courage of his convictions and the ability to stand you down.

The earliest days described in the Bible are positively barbaric. The only reason the Black Furies didn't scour these bastards from the planet was that they weren't in our stomping grounds for quite some time. I guess the Silent Striders and Glass Walkers must have coddled them. That latter one fits, I suppose: patriarchy is a tool of the Weaver, and so are the Glass Walkers. In any case, women are portrayed as property in the Old Testament. Consider the Book of Exodus and the end of the Ten Commandments: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." Hm. Women get higher status than donkeys, but lower than houses. Lot was acclaimed as an honorable man after offering to turn his two daughters out of his home so they could be gang-raped by an angry mob. Charming people, these.

Adam exerts his power over Eve by naming her — and naming, as we have discussed, is part of the purview of the Weaver. The alleged first male uses Weaver-magics to subdue Woman. Yes, my heart swells up with love. Now, I realize that these stories — and there are dozens like them, just read the book some time if you can manage it — weren't written as they happened, but rather were based on old legends and

myths. So they may not have happened as written. Some of them we're sure didn't happen that way, as Gaia hasn't made mention of a Jehovah gliding around shaping the Tellurian when She wasn't paying attention. But the point is that even if the stories in the Old Testament didn't happen the way the Bible presents them, the authors and the worshippers who take the stories as literal truth are certainly guilty of abusive levels of prejudice.

Although, as I said above, the lands of the eastern Mediterranean were not our tribal territory, certain crimes — the rape of Lot's daughters in Sodom, for instance — did call out to us, over thousands of miles. Oh, yes, I know, the Book of Genesis doesn't say that Lot did turn his daughters over to the mob, only that he offered to, but that's not the way *we* hear the story. He assuredly turned them over to the mob, and that got our sisters' attention. They descended on Sodom via Moon Bridge. The city *was* destroyed that night, like Genesis has it, but it wasn't fire from the hands of the Lord; it was the black storm of dozens of Bacchantes tearing stone from mortar and burning everything they could find.

We don't have as great a problem with the New Testament. That Christ fellow sounds like he wasn't an altogether bad guy, though I think his words have led to a little too much glorification of victimhood. Suffering for suffering's sake isn't honorable or useful. But you're a Black Fury. You know that.

I sent this part of the document past Sister Mary Windhowl, one of the Order of Our Merciful Mother. She sadly agreed with a lot of it, but asked me to include the following:

Not every woman portrayed in the Old Testament is a possession or a whore. One in particular comes to mind as a counterexample. In Judges 4 and 5, Deborah is the leader — maybe just a judge at first, but by Judges 5 the true leader — of the Israelites, and leads them to victory in battle against the Canaanites. She doesn't submit to men's authority, and is described as "the mother of Israel"; her reign is a time of victory, and then peace, throughout Israel.

Plenty of examples of strong women can be found in the Old Testament if you know where to look. The mother of Moses and the midwives of that day went to great lengths to ensure that newborn sons would not be turned over to Pharaoh for slaughter. Huldah, Miriam, Noadiah, and others are listed as Prophetesses, reminding us that the voice of greater wisdom did not choose only from among men.

The Fall of Rome, the Dark Ages, and the Church

I'm not a historian. And even if I were, I don't have a lot of affection for the Namer's history books. Some of this may not match what you've heard in school. I'm telling it like our aunts and grandmothers tell it. You got a problem, you take it up with them.

The end of Rome was just the beginning of Christianity. Starting in the late days of the Roman Empire, this cult, which admixed Patriarch-worship with good stuff about peace and self-sacrifice, began to spread throughout the Mediterranean basin and into Europe.

Now, this was fine, at first; I'm told the cult of Mithras spread throughout the Roman Empire, and the Romans' sky gods, which were stolen from the Greeks' sky gods, were also fairly ubiquitous during the Empire. So, one sky god cult replaces another sky god cult. They had the usual neuroses: all male clergy, no sex for the holy men (at least officially), that sort of thing. Eventually the Emperors of Rome started to favor this cult over their former state-sanctioned pagan stuff. By this point their state religions had lost any real connection to the Goddess, so it wasn't like there was a huge loss of adherents to Gaia's ways as a result of that conversion. So far, no problem.

Except that the priests of this particular sky god quickly went from harmless peaceniks to "convert or die" sorts of guys. They began traveling through the woods to otherwise peaceful villages and co-opting the villages' leadership, threatening harmless earth-loving witches with dismemberment, tromping on holy days, and so on. You might imagine that we didn't have a lot of affection for them, and you would be right. They even managed to convert some fairly wild barbarians, the Vandals and Goths and their cousins. So when Rome did fall to the barbarians of the East (something we welcomed) Christianity didn't die.

Most of us took up arms against the Church in some form round about the beginning of the seventh century. We weren't always blatant; sometimes we just made a point of ruining Christians' crops or gobbling up their game animals. More often, though, we targeted priests and their men who tormented or imprisoned wise women in villages and forced conversion away from the worship of Gaia. Do not forget that the Black Furies are the incarnation of Gaia's vengeance: we have little patience for eunuchs who trample the right and true law of the world.

Churches burned, churchmen died. It couldn't last, of course; within just a few centuries all of Europe was nominally a Christian land. Even then we acted against

the Church: in those days the forces of the Patriarch and the Namer were our greatest enemies. Shut your mouth: I said "in those days" and I meant it. The Wyrm might be our greatest enemy now, but all of our legends say that its power was far less than what we see today. The Weaver, not the Wyrm, has been the constant threat.

These were the days that the Order of Our Merciful Mother came into being. The Order really began when a remote Fury Kin entered an abbey as a nun. This sister, whose name has been lost to us, kept in touch with her cousins and family by letter, and she spoke of her own devotion to the Virgin Mother and the many good works that her abbey was responsible for. Word of this eventually reached a pack of Furies more interested in good works than in the violent dismemberment of "Weaver tools."

Showing a degree of subtlety not frequently seen among our sisters, this pack convinced the local clerical authorities that they truly wished to serve God, and they, too, were admitted to the abbey. This pack, soon referring to itself as the Order of Our Merciful Mother, gained great influence within the Church and the tribe as other packs slowly joined their cause. The Order of Our Merciful Mother worked throughout the centuries to reform the Roman Catholic Church — and many of its spin-offs and children-churches — and to help venerate the strong female image of the Virgin Mother. They haven't always succeeded, but they *have* always been able to feed information on Church activity to the rest of the tribe when it really mattered.

The Amazons of Diana and the Bacchantes (which were even more militant back then) at that time didn't particularly welcome the Order or their information; given the image of nuns as "brides of God," the two other camps saw the Order as traitors to Gaia. Plenty of blood was shed over the next few decades, until a crone pack of Freebooters — arguably neutral in this matter — volunteered to hold peace talks between the camps. When the talks were over, the groups were no longer at war, but to this day I know that there is not much love between them.

The Rise of Islam

One movement among the humans deserves additional attention. In the lands of southwest Asia, an offshoot of the Judeo-Christian faith called Islam sprang up during the early 7th century. A wealthy young man called Muhammad founded this religion; its tenets centered on the responsibility of humans to one another, and humanity's universal brotherhood. So far, so good. However, when it came to the status and treatment of women, Islam was no better than its spiritual ancestors, Judaism and Christianity. Women had no control over their own marriages or bodies, and were forced to hide themselves from men, behind shapeless robes and veils.

Women were, in short, property. A man could divorce a woman simply by saying "I divorce you" three times, while a woman generally could not get a divorce of her own will. Polygamy was common; having many wives was a sign of high status. A woman could inherit property, but received only half the share that male heirs received. Similarly, a woman's testimony at trial had only half the legal weight of a man's testimony.

Preoccupied as we were with the Christian church in Europe, the Black Furies paid little attention to Arabian lands until the Europeans went to war with them. Once the Crusades started, some Freebooters turned their attention south and east, toward Arab lands. The traditional territory of the Silent Striders and a few other tribes, this area had many unclaimed sites of power that our aunts opened as Black Fury caerns. The Freebooters could not always hold such caerns, of course; other tribes moved in to join the Furies in the caerns' custody, or seized them by force. Some caerns were even stolen by mortal wizards, who drained them for unknown nefarious purposes. In the end tally, we have never been a force in Arabian lands, but we occasionally make our presence known there.

The Burning Times

One real downside of the strife between the Order of Our Merciful Mother and the Amazons and Bacchantes was that some higher-ups in the Church became aware that "unholy things" stalked the night. Some were known to bloodily dismember nuns, after all, and wore bare breasts, fangs, and claws.

Obviously — to them — these women must be witches and servants of the Devil. Okay, if you're not familiar with Christianity's devil myth, imagine the Horned God, only with everything good about that archetype turned upside down. He's the tempter, the destroyer, the wickedest being that ever lived, and provider of black magic. The general assumption, even by the hard core today, is that witches are in league with this Devil and therefore need to be killed.

Come the fourteenth century and the Inquisition gets started in earnest. This is a bad time for us — not as bad, I'm told, as it was for the vampires, who allegedly provoked it even more than we did, and got hoist on their own petard, but pretty bad nonetheless. To Christians, Gaian ritual may as well be satanic witchcraft, when they're not purloining it for their own holidays, of course... Our families practiced — still practice — Gaian ritual every day, and on plenty of occasions a pack of Furies will show up and join the festivities. These were the first villages and families pointed out as witches. They weren't the last, unfortunately; superstition, rumor, and malice sent Inquisitors

to the doorsteps of hundreds of women who were neither pagans nor Gaians.

On the other hand, we were willing to fight back. I like to believe that my grandmothers and aunts fought with style and panache, and scared the shit out of dozens of pathetic villagers with pitchforks and branding irons. We got our loved ones out of the most dangerous areas and protected the ones at risk.

Few Black Furies were ever put to the torch, honestly. Many of my sisters want to believe that the Church put werewolves to death by the hundreds, but I just can't find records or legends that point to that. Kinfolk? Yes, scores of Kinfolk died. But few of us did. It just doesn't make sense that we would. Vampires? Yes, look, vampire, find one, hold it off with a cross, set it on fire, poof, no vampire. Werewolf? Find one, hold out your cross, lose your left arm, get out a torch, lose your right arm, anyone else? We have plenty of things to stoke our anger; let's not add a martyr complex that we don't need.

Our grandmothers did the best they could to keep their Kinfolk safe from the Inquisition. An accidental response was the formation of the Sisterhood, which could best be described as an early Underground Railroad. Furies spirited wise women and Kinfolk out of areas under the oppression of the Inquisition as stealthily as they could, and took them to safe places.

The Inquisition lasted long enough, in various forms, that those Furies and Kinfolk that became closely involved with getting their sisters to safety became a more formal organization: today their descendants are known as the Sisterhood camp of the Furies. Owing to its origins, the Sisterhood has always incorporated more Kinfolk than the other camps have; it depends on its network of fences, smugglers, and border-hoppers to operate.

The Renaissance

Humankind did plenty of wonderful things between the end of the so-called Dark Ages and the rise of the modern era. I just don't know much about it. It's a couple of centuries that weren't all that noteworthy to the Black Furies. The Weaver's power rose — a rise that we fought against as best we could — but the Wyld did not decline too slowly. The Renaissance was a time for the Glass Walkers and the Bone Gnawers.

Honestly, I believe the Namer and his children would have even more influence today had it not been for our work during the Renaissance. Black Furies in the Order of Our Merciful Mother gently pulled monks with a scholarly bent away from the Namer's embrace; those among the Freebooters and the Sisterhood carved out Wyld places in burgeoning Renaissance cities; and Galliards of all camps kept stories of greener days in humans' memories. Who knows what kind of cybernetic nightmare we might be living in today were it not for those sisters?

Return to the Americas

Much of what follows I have gleaned through invoking one of my ancestor-spirits, Deborah the Bulletproof. She knows what I am doing with the information I have learned; she does not entirely approve.

The Pure Ones — those Garou who traveled to the Americas with their Kin tribes tens of thousands of years ago — mostly remained out of touch. Our ancestors remembered that the three "Brother Tribes" lived in a far-off land, and paid them respect from a distance, but we had plenty of land to worry about across Europe and Asia. Africa was off-limits even then, of course — the Garou had never quite fought to the heart of that wild continent during the War of Rage, and the other shapechangers who lived there had long memories and good reason to hate us. And even the wildest Freebooters were only dimly aware that Australia existed.

Rumors abounded that moon bridges connected the most powerful caerns of the Pure Lands with those in Europe and Asia, but those bridges were closed to us at the far end, and the rare headstrong pack that charged through with a War Bridge did not return. The omens did not indicate that the Pure Lands had fallen to the Wyrm, so we simply assumed that the Brother Tribes wanted to be left alone. Imagine, then, our surprise around the beginning of the sixteenth century when our Kinfolk heard rumors that the humans, unaided, had found a land across the Atlantic.

It was remarkably difficult for a pack of Black Furies to reach the shores of North America by boat unaided. Although the Inner Calyx is said to have debated the matter for weeks, they eventually decreed that no War Bridges would be opened to assault the tribes of North America. Instead, several packs of Furies infiltrated the ranks of the Poor Sisters of Saint Clare, a group of Catholic nuns with the intention of founding monasteries in the New World. The first several of these monasteries failed, incidentally; no doubt because a few expeditions counted half a dozen Black Furies among their number, and lost the work those Sisters would have represented upon arrival on foreign shores.

The Freebooters of this time leave stories of vast landscapes unspoiled by the touch of Man's hand. At the same time, however, they tell us of dozens of Wyld places and Glades left undefended by the Croatan, Uktena, and Wendigo. The Pure Ones had lived for so long without any serious threat from the Wyrm that they left beautiful and sacred sites without so much as a pack to protect them from such encroachment. Our ancestors tell us that they did not leave such a state of

affairs alone for long; they quickly seized a likely caern in what is now Pennsylvania, opened it, and established a moon bridge to the Sept of Bygone Visions. A pack of sisters came through the bridge to help defend the caern and act as ambassadors to the lost three tribes, should they show their muzzles.

To give the Croatan credit, it took them only one night to discover our transgression; a dozen or so Garou arrived at dawn. Some were warriors and wore the war-form, while others were obviously diplomats. They still spoke the old tongue, the Mother's tongue; they called us Wyrmcomers and commanded us to leave their "Pure Lands." We refused, but neither tribe was willing to raise klaive against the other right away. A sort of détente arose within a few hours; the Croatan fell back, out of sight of the caern, and returned the next day with a new reason that we should leave the Pure Lands. Our Philodox responded with carefully worded refusals to do so, perhaps reminding the Croatan of their inability to adequately defend all of the lands within their protectorate. The Croatan would nod at this, fall back, and return the next day. This state of affairs continued for a week, until a powerful Wyrm-creature — one of the first such seen in these lands for millennia — attacked the Furies' caern. The Croatan joined in its defense, and in the aftermath of the fight declared a peace, in light of our ancestors' obvious dedication to exterminating the Wyrm's minions wherever they might lair.

Similar scenes repeated themselves throughout the next century, and they did not always end in the death of Wyrm-creatures and peace between Black Furies and Pure Ones. It took decades for the Pure Ones to trust the Black Furies — and the Croatan's sacrifice certainly did not speed that process. It took centuries for us to call one another friend. Today we have a tenuous peace with the Wendigo (more than many other tribes can say); the Uktena are allies. We mourn the Croatan as lost cousins.

The Amazon

One of the things I find most frustrating when dealing with members of other tribes is that so many of them are idiots. For instance, a few weeks ago I was having an interesting conversation about national

healthcare systems with a Glass Walker of my acquaintance when the topic shifted to the war in South America. I noted that it was important to me, and she replied, "Well, sure, I would think it would be, with the Amazon River being down there and you all being Amazons and such." I don't want to think about what the look on my face must have been; she changed the subject.

The Black Furies first moved into South America with Spanish and Portuguese missionaries. The majority of those were sisters of the Order of Our Merciful Mother, but plenty of other Furies, particularly Freebooters, attached themselves to Latin settlers across the Americas and moved south as they did. Our aunts and cousins were among the first to encounter the (apparently terrifying) werecats of the Amazon jungle, and the first to develop extensive Kinfolk webs among the humans of South America. They were also the first to report the decimation of the Amazon jungle to the Western Concordat, and have been one of the few tribes able to reliably keep peace with the werebeasts of the rainforest. The Freebooters still have clashes with the werecats, I am told, but that is because they are pretty fanatical about finding pure areas and establish their own defenses, regardless of occupation by other werebeings.

Schism

The greatest internal political conflict within the Black Fury tribe took place not long after American Furies reached a tenuous peace with the Wendigo, Croatan, and Uktena. Put simply, the Inner and Outer Calyxes could not cope well with the prospect of the sheer *size* of the Americas as apparently empty land. Few packs of Furies were sent to the Americas — some to missions in Mexico (including lands we now think of as Texas and California) and others to the East Coast. Not enough Garou were available to fill up North America in the same way that the Western Concordat occupied the wild parts of Europe and West Asia.

The guiding mothers of our tribe did not wish to assign numbers of Furies to the Americas, because the land was such an unknown quantity and, apparently, was safe enough. But we found danger right from the start: Wyld-spirits run crazy, newly awakened Wyrm and Weaver-spirits, other shapeshifters full of hate for us and our ways, and more damned vampires than you'd think. Additionally, the Europeans had obviously brought their own evil with them. The Pure Ones' name for the European humans, "Wyrmbringers," rings truer than I wish it did.

I digress. American Furies wanted more support from European Furies, and more freedom from the dictates of the Inner and Outer Calyx — this was a new land, and the rules were not the same. The European Furies disagreed with this assessment, and wanted to continue to watch over packs as they wished, keeping most in Europe, home to the greater danger.

Commentary

While building up the list of legends I wanted to hit here, I discussed the Schism with one of my elders, a Crone calling herself Helga Daggersblade. I suppose my tone of voice made it clear whom I blamed for the Schism. Here, in the interests of fairness, is Helga's side of things:

The Wyrm has always been strong in Europe, and the Weaver even moreso. The American Furies insist to this day that the Calyx refused to send warriors where they were obviously needed, but the truth, if you hear the legends I hear, is that the tribe couldn't spare any more packs to traipse across a huge, largely Wyrm-free land. The Uktena, Croatan and Wendigo obviously already had things well in hand, and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were rife with Wyrm activity across Europe. The Calyx simply couldn't spare anyone — no packs lounged around inactive, Gaia knows.

Although the conflict never quite reached civil war, a few packs did come to blows. I can't tell from the stories whether any Furies actually killed each other, but surely that would have been a serious crime. Regardless, after one of these pack-on-pack tussles, leadership from both sides came together to let wiser heads prevail. After communing with nature spirits and mediation by a few trusted Children of Gaia and old Fury metis who'd been particularly touched by the Mother's wisdom, the Calyx in Europe freed the Furies in the Americas to act as they saw fit, though they did not provide much more womanpower as support. Within a generation or two, however, the Furies had bred into local populations (either native or European settlers) and had families of Kinfolk, and a few young Garou to boot.

War

I want to make this manuscript something more than a tally of wars among the apes, but to be truthful it's tough going. War brings the most dangerous aspects of the Wyrm close to the Realm. Death, disease, famine, rape: these are the Wyrm's faces and this is the filth that Man drags himself through every time one of his diplomats fails to make a point.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were dozens of wars: some purely in the Americas, some purely in Europe, and a few that included both. Each time, the Black Furies went afield. If the men wished to slaughter each other on the open field, that was their prerogative — many of my aunts and grand-

mothers applauded each new war, knowing it would bleed off the most mindlessly aggressive among the apes.

As soon as men at war left the field to pillage, rape and plunder, we were there. If only there had been more of us, we might have truly forced the armies of Europe to fight honorably. As it was, we had our vengeance on more than one company that sought to ease its battlefield tensions upon the bodies and homes of noncombatant women. And in our copious free time off from this chore, we fought miserable, disease-laden Wyrm things that lurked in the Umbra after battles.

I won't bore you with the list, although I have heard that one of the Wyrmthings that the Fangs of Artemis pack fought in the Balkans in the late nineteenth century, a miserable fiend calling itself Kolkos, has been spotted by reliable witnesses gorging itself on the hatred, fear and misery created by recent events there. One of the Temple of Artemis went on to join a Silver Pack; perhaps a group of my sisters even today moves against Kolkos War-Feast.

Dara and the Storm Eater

Just as the conflict between European and American Black Furies settled down, the Croatan vanished. As far as I know, there were no survivors. I've heard plenty of stories about where they went: they traveled to greener pastures deep in the Umbra; they sacrificed themselves to save the world from an aspect of the Wyrm; they went over to the Wyrm *en masse*. I don't know what really happened, but the Uktena I know speak in hushed tones of the majesty of the Croatan sacrifice.

Now, I'm not a Theurge, so I may not understand all of the details here, but apparently, with the death of the Croatan, a fair number of the spirit wards that they kept in place started to unravel. This let out some pretty huge Wyrm spirits to rampage across the continent. Remember stories about the Great Dust Bowl? Might've been one of those Wyrm creatures, a century after the others.

For reasons we still don't entirely understand, one very powerful Wyrm beast escaped from the Pure Ones' ancient prison and did a *lot* of damage to the spirit world of North America west of the Mississippi. It turned the Umbra into some sort of continuous storm, wreaked havoc with otherwise ordinary nature spirits, and even scratched at the wall between our Umbra and the realms of the dead. Bad news.

Eventually, in 1890 or so, the surviving tribes figured out how to destroy the Storm Eater. They didn't write down the ritual (you see, they weren't stupid, like your author), but it took an enormous sacrifice. Thankfully, that wasn't an entire tribe. Instead, a large group of heroes gathered and sacrificed their own life energy to beat the Storm Eater.

A Black Fury was a part of this great sacrifice; a Crone calling herself Dara Zetian was the first to sacrifice her own life, spitting hatred for the Wyrm through cracked and ancient lips and baring her fangs and claws to the bitter end. One of our sisters carries her labrys, now called Dara's Vengeance, today.

The 20th Century

The twentieth century, surely the last to pass before the advent of the Apocalypse, saw women across the world make great strides in fighting patriarchy and earning full legal equality to human men. At the same time, the twentieth century saw the virtual destruction of millions of acres of otherwise pristine land in America and Asia and more war than any century before had seen. The power of the Namer and the Wyrm was on the rise throughout the twentieth century, leading to the world's current mad state.

The Opening of the West

By around 1900 the United States controlled the central part of North America, from coast to coast, and it didn't take the Americans long before they ripped open the last of the native tribes' big chunks of land and despoiled it too. Charming people, really, the Americans. If you can keep from killing them in the first five minutes you're sure to make it at least another fifteen. Ah, I digress. I suppose I'm an American myself, technically.

We don't have a lot of scholars as such, but the Theurges and Galliards keep track of old mysticism and various theories, and one of the things I've heard passed to me was that within a few years of the United States laying claim to its current contiguous area the best part of the Wyld whooshed out of its terrain like air out of an old bike tire. The caerns were still there, but the scary darkness, the wild green energy, the ghosts and spirits dancing in the morning mist, all of them got a little less... powerful. Who knows, maybe this was Gaia's idea of a warning: "Only one century left until the End Times begin," or just, "I only have a century left in me." Now I'm having a hard time thinking about anything else and am getting somewhat depressed. Perhaps a tale of brutal vengeance will bring me back.

The town of Fort Dodge, Iowa was a nothing little speck at the turn of the century. But at some point a Black Fury Kinfolk family moved into the town; when the family's third daughter turned out to be Garou, a pack of Furies — the Claws of Glory — descended on the city in celebration. The most mystically aware member of the pack, a young Theurge called Elizabeth Flagshredder, sensed the fingers of the Wyrm near the town's schoolhouse. After the party ended, the Claws

of Glory spent some time investigating, both in the physical realm and Umbra, and they discovered a nest of Wyrmlings guarding a clutch of hideous, malformed eggs. The Wyrmlings were dispatched relatively easily, but the eggs proved invulnerable to this; they seemed to be tied to a shallow grave in the physical realm, one just behind the school. The Claws returned to the Realm just as school was about to begin. Here they discovered the schoolmistress — a woman who showed no obvious Wyrm taint about her — physically tormenting slow students; near the end of the day she set several youths on one girl who could not meet the schoolmarm's exacting standards. As she screamed for help, bleeding, the Claws took action.

The schoolmarm's entire body was never found; the school itself was demolished. The Delirium protected the children from the worst of the attack; for the most part, the town believed that a tornado struck and destroyed the school. The shallow grave, as it happened, belonged to a young student thought carried off by wolves; his corpse showed clear signs of having been beaten to death.

Today, a city office building sits where the school once was, and though few humans remember the actions of the Claws of Glory — nearly none even know of the school that once sat under the Flachsbart Municipal Office Building — many benefit from their long-ago actions. There isn't any magic in the place, not really, but the reverberations of that long-ago justice subtly touch the humans who work in the building. Few of them fit the mold of the apathetic government employee; instead, most of them sincerely care about the city residents who come to them for help. It's a rare thing, but the Furies who recognize the effect see that their own actions can have positive consequences, a century or more after the fact.

The Vote

In most western democracies, at the dawn of the twentieth century women were disenfranchised: they could not own property, they could not vote, and they were wholly subject to the will of their husband or, if single, their oldest male relative. Let's not even get into what it meant to be a gay woman before the 1920s: life as a straight woman was hard enough. The struggle for legal equality had begun long before the 1900s, but it was the years between the Spanish-American War and the so-called Great War that saw the greatest strides toward this goal.

For many Black Furies, the vote itself was simply too abstract a concept to fight for. This was especially true for those raised purely in Garou society; our hierarchies are clear to us, as you well know, and we don't have any truck with preposterous notions like "one person, one vote." The most capable among us lead, and if they are too weak, the strong challenge them, and then they lead.

Voting is... abstruse. Jane Three-Elk, a lupus Ragabash, called it "preposterous," back in the day. But even the most stubbornly anti-intellectual Ahroun among us could see that this prize was particularly valuable to our human sisters and nieces. It had symbolic power, if nothing else, and many of those of the homid breed believed — rightly, as it happened — that the vote's power could bring benefit even to the Garou. Our Kin's influence in the more open western lands of the United States helped get women the vote there earlier than the rest of the country, and even got a woman into the humans' government before the entire country let them vote.

The Great War

The Wyrm opened whole new realms of suffering to celebrate the hideous destruction of the Great War. Millions of men died in ways more terrible than had been seen in any war before. I use the word "men" there intentionally: the war itself did not kill nearly as many women as men. This has always been the case.

Packs upon packs of Black Furies descended upon the battlefields of Europe during the Great War. For every new atrocity, there was the possibility that Malfeas might disgorge Wyrmlings to feed on the horror. As well, the crimes of war called to us like a klaxon: desperate, starving and sick men committed crimes against Gaia and women across the front.

Dozens of powerful Wyrmspawn lurked in the Umbra behind the slowly shifting trenches of the Great War. Some, like Ulgesh the Hope-Render, made ready targets of themselves as they caused dozens of soldiers to commit suicide in the trenches; packs like the Ghost Runners brought that creature and its siblings down. Disease Wyrms like Tarkhor Night-Murderer escaped our notice and helped spread infection during the war and epidemic in its wake.

The Early Twentieth Century

From the end of the Great War to the end of its child, the Second World War, the status of women in Western society whirled up and down crazily. A few women took to the workplace in America at the end of the Great War, as American soldiers marched over to watch the end of that conflict. This kind of liberation, when combined with suffrage movements across most of the world and the depopulation of the males of Europe in the war's wake, gave women a relative boost in social standing.

Throughout the 1920s in America and Europe, as men and women experimented with new social structures, Black Furies quietly rejoiced. Women were able to establish a place that was purely their own in this

time, and enter into romantic and sexual relationships with men on a much more equal basis. Women were far less prized as property, and more respected as independent beings. It wasn't the whole war, but an important battle was turning our way.

When the men of the world decided it was once again time to line up and kill one another, American women entered the workforce in previously unheard-of numbers. Again, this was a good thing. It reacquainted women with the idea of being part of the economy, rather than being prizes to be won with labor's spoils. Slowly, human women began to realize that they weren't destined to live as some man's chattel, but rather could stand on their own and live as they wished. We encouraged this as best we could, though we didn't really need to.

During the Second World War, we were unable to take as strong a role as we would have liked. As the Axis forces arose in Europe, and the Nazis and their pawns began to implement their Final Solution, the Black Furies should have been able to take decisive action. Yes, there were millions of Axis soldiers involved with the extermination of the Jews, but we didn't get involved until it was too late. Surviving Crones from the war era offer two primary explanations for this.

First, they say, the Italian and German invasions of our homeland in Greece brought the enormity of modern warfare home to roost, and the tribe had its hands full keeping our most sacred places free of Axis domination. Secondly, the atrocities of war throughout Europe spawned thousands of Wyrmlings, and those Furies that could be spared from the guerilla fighting in Greece spent most of their time fighting spirit marauders. By the time Greece was liberated in 1943, the Nazi death machine was churning near full capacity. The Crones tell us that the Furies did strike at the edges of the death camps, but to little avail. The truth, I'm afraid, is that for much of the war our aunts and mothers were ignorant as to what was going on, and preferred to concentrate on problems that were easier to solve with tooth and labrys. I'm not particularly proud of this part of our history, and neither are most of my sisters and cousins, but it looks like that's pretty close to the truth.

Women's Liberation

For the love of Gaia, don't even use the phrase "Women's Liberation" around most of the tribe. Half of them lived through the early seventies as Garou and don't like to be reminded of what went on; the other half either feels that human women still haven't been liberated from the yoke of Man, or that human women are already liberated enough, and spend too much time trying to be like human men rather than women. If you ever need to

start an argument among Furies, just make a random comment about "Women's Liberation" near a pack or two.

A group of (human) American feminist thinkers, writers, and activist formed the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1967; near the top of its agenda was the passage of an Equal Rights Amendment, a simple amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would prevent any American law from favoring men over women. The amendment passed the US Senate and House of Representatives in overwhelming numbers by 1972.

The vicious patriarchy that arose across America in response to the ERA was downright sickening. Male politicians and their pawns organized popular uprisings against the passage of the amendment; they threw administrative and logistical roadblocks in the ERA's way, and they even sued to stop activism in favor of the thing. In the end, sadly, this kind of reactionary, power-clutching spite was enough to stop the ERA's passage; it missed ratification by three states in a nation of fifty.

The End Times

Time grows short. The Mother doesn't have too many spins left in her, if the Wyrm and Weaver have anything to say about it. The past fifteen years have been interesting times.

Spartacus' Revolt

In early 1989, a male Fury metis calling himself Spartacus gathered a large pack consisting mostly of male Fury metis. He had been building this pack and his message for about ten years, and had a total of nine Garou in his pack, which he named Freedom. His origin and parentage are unclear to those I've spoken to; as best we can gather, he grew up in a remarkably abusive Fury Sept somewhere in Europe.

This Spartacus believed that male Fury metis suffered unduly at the hands of their tribesisters, and he proposed to throw off those shackles and... do... well, something. Rumor went in a lot of directions. Some had it that Spartacus wanted to form his own tribe; others believed that he wished to avenge himself upon the Sept that raised him; the majority were under the impression that he simply wanted to raise the status of the male metis within the tribe as a whole.

The last was probably closest to the truth, but two things stood against him. First, as you no doubt realize, most Fury septs do hold the male metis in some regard: otherwise, why bother keeping them? We don't keep their fertile siblings, even when they are Garou. They fill an important role in our culture, one that the Crones will describe to you as you grow older.

Second, even as a Fury, even as a metis straddling the gender divide, Spartacus was as full of Rage as any other male Garou. His call for attention and consideration rapidly became a summons to battle. Throughout the winter, Freedom argued, challenged, and even fought Fury packs across much of North America. However, by the middle of 1990 Freedom was no more; Spartacus was challenged to single combat by Challa Lawgiver of the Sept of the Northwest Passage, and lost. The price of the loss was to give up his pack and name, and swear loyalty to Challa. Spartacus performed the Rite of Renunciation, and lives a new life now.

The Stepmothers

In 1994, we suffered one of our greatest losses in a century. We do not tell the other tribes of this pain; it is not theirs to share in, nor to avenge. Sharra Cleanwater, a homid Ahroun, and her pack, an environmentalist group devoted to Trout (of all things) called the Streamrunners, apparently discovered heavy metals leaching into fresh water in northeast Wyoming. It is hard to piece together their path, but the spirits say they traced the poison back to an abandoned silver mine that had been taken over by Black Spiral Dancers.

Satanic Panic

The FBI and most big-city police will tell you that satanic ritual murder is, in short, hooey. There aren't teenagers or adults who run into the woods on nights of the full moon to put on black facepaint and sacrifice cats or babies. Nearly every allegedly satanic murder is the result of a lone, insane person, or a much more mundane criminal trying to cover up his tracks. This is what the FBI's national statistics tell them. This is the safe thing to believe. There aren't bogeymen in the woods who will steal your children. Be calm, be safe.

Lies.

Evil is all around you. It may be incarnate through the more obvious magics of the Wyrm and his servants, or it might just be the guy ignoring his pregnant wife and crying kid in the apartment next door as he tries to blot out the shitty workday he has every day. It doesn't matter. When a nexus of suffering coalesces in any place, the tendrils of the Wyrm will take hold. They might infect a perfectly ordinary person and they might do so subtly enough that our own sight couldn't point the taint out to us. But it is surely there. Hundreds of children vanish every day, and the Garou kidnap few of them. There *are* bogeymen in the woods.

Most packs in the Streamrunners' position would have returned to the nearest sept and called for a moot to lay out a plan for war on this Hive. But Cleanwater, her old allies have told me, had an ego the size of Teapot Dome and was on bad terms with the Sept of the Badlands. The Streamrunners entered the Hive without backup, without the knowledge of the nearby sept.

They did not escape sane. We'll probably never know whether they walked the Black Spiral willingly or were forced to do so. Those that have encountered the pack — now calling itself the Wicked Stepmothers, which I'm sure is the source of plenty of hyuks down in the bowels of the Hive — have heard conflicting tales from Sh'ra Gthulkya, Sharra's new... identity. All we know is that four women who were once among our bravest and strongest now serve the enemy as a unit.

It gets worse. Since '94, the Stepmothers have kidnapped three likely Fury cubs from their birth parents, and the pack is now known to have six members. No, I don't know what happened to the seventh. They act in cunning mockery of Fury tactics: a young woman or man who serves the laws of Gaia well may find herself swept into a burning building or torn limb from limb in retribution from the Wyrm.

These criminals know our secrets: the pack's Galliard, a lupus now called Ulthala Childslayer, was an Athro familiar with the Sept of the Hand of Gaia who'd even visited Crete once. The Inner Calyx does not seem to recognize the threat this pack represents; only in the last year have they declared Sharra Cleanwater an enemy. It is possible, I suppose, that the pack can be saved, but it seems more likely that they will have to be destroyed. No doubt some of our warriors will perish with them.

A New Schism

We are not, despite various Bone Gnawers' wet dreams, a tribe full of "ass-kicking warrior dykes." We apply the vengeance and justice of Gaia unto the throats of those who dare defy Her will. We are a force of nature, nothing less. Or at least, we *were*.

Of late — since around 1990, I would guess — females of other tribes have joined the Black Furies under the assumption that we are what the other tribes proclaim us to be: simple warriors who, though we are just chicks, are just as badass as any man you'll cross. Pardon my disgust. We fight as well as any male Garou, but we don't line up in ranks like the Get of Fenris, nor kneel down in supplication and homage before a great king as the Silver Fangs or Shadow Lords do. We have a role to play that has nothing to do with fighting wars and everything to do with exacting justice.

Unfortunately, many of these newcomers to the tribe cannot reconcile themselves to our true role. They want to swagger like the men of the other tribes do, and go to war after their fashion. Traditionalists — particularly the Bacchantes camp — seem unable to persuade this faction to act in an appropriate fashion. Outright challenges don't seem to work, either, since they play right into the other tribes' laws and rituals. These Garou tend to fall naturally to the Amazons of Diana, a camp that approves of and cultivates this kind of behavior; the conflict described here has simmered between the Amazons and the Bacchantes for centuries or longer. Only now has it erupted into something greater than a war of words. If you are a proper traditionalist, and you encounter such a pack, try to re-educate them as best you can. Failing that, avoid them when possible. They may fight for Gaia, but they may as well be Glass Walkers for their lack of devotion to our ways.

Bangladesh

In early June of 1999, something *big* happened in Pakistan. I admit that I don't entirely know what went down. You might not even remember by now — disasters in Southern Asia don't always impact all that strongly on the Western consciousness — but an enormous typhoon struck Pakistan and Bangladesh around that time, killing tens of thousands. Indian, Pakistani, and Bangladeshi governments all blamed one another for the massive number of dead, each accusing the others alternately of mishandling the crisis, not bringing emergency aid quickly enough, precipitating it through disastrous environmental policy, or taking advantage of it for military or economic gain.

The politicking and bullshit infighting is to be expected, and it's done a very good job of covering what really happened. So good that I'm not even positive; I hear a lot of reports. I've got the events pretty much narrowed down to two possibilities. We

That Second Possibility

The "default" version of events, as seen in **A World of Rage** and somewhat mangled by the narrator here, is the assumed one in the World of Darkness. That doesn't mean it has to be that way in your Storyteller's chronicle. He may well prefer to have one of the alternate descriptions here be what's really the case, or, more deviously, he might have his own plans regarding those events. Assume nothing.

can't ask any of the Garou that were there; I am nearly certain that none survived, and whatever did them in didn't even leave a remnant to limp to the afterlife as an ancestor-spirit. Given the location, the majority of the nearby Garou were Glass Walkers, Bone Gnawers, and Stargazers, but there were at least two Black Furies involved. One of them, Cara Brightcleaver, carried an ancient labrys, Bog-render, which we now assume is lost.

First, it may have been that an unbelievably powerful vampire came into being, and in so doing dragged down the wall between the lands of the dead and the mortal realm for a short while. I don't know if this thing was a new vampire, or if it was an ancient one that had been dormant. I'm not certain how they work. (Frankly, I almost hope that it's an ancient one that had been dormant. The thought of a brand-new vampire having that kind of power scares the shit out of me.) A huge force descended on this being, including both werewolves and other vampires, and beat it until it died. It took most of its attackers with it. One upside of this scenario is that it explains the recent increase in ghosts and the walking dead that we've run into in my hometown in Texas. On the other hand, I have no clue why vampires would be attacking one another, or whether that thing has brothers.

The other possibility is that this wasn't a vampire in the sense that we usually encounter them (pale, wears black, dies easily when you catch them) but rather the sort of incredibly powerful Wyrm spirit that we've also seen rise up recently in Russia. This got the attention of a group that might be some kind of shadow government behind a couple of nuclear-powered nations (for fun, I'll call them "the Bavarian Illuminati"). It also got the attention of several packs of Garou, as I mentioned above. The Garou involved in the direct battle held the thing at bay long enough for either some destructive ritual to go off, or for the Illuminati to nuke the goddamn thing. The humans are alleged to have found radioactive residue in the area, and they have helpfully covered it up. I suppose we probably owe the Illuminati some kind of thanks for this, if they were involved (and if they really exist).

The Balkans and the Shadow Lords

The lands of the Balkan and Carpathian Mountains have known steady war of some kind for the last decade, and sporadic fighting for most of recorded history. The land's just a freaking highway for invaders headed into or out of Europe, so there's a tinderbox of hostile ethnic groups all crammed into that small space. Soviet Communism kept things rela-

tively peaceful for a while, but when it evaporated the whole region went to hell.

We have to pay attention to the Balkans, of course, because they butt right up against our ancestral homeland and we've always had Kinfolk in the area. We also give them special consideration because of the horrifying abuse and degradation that women receive on a daily basis in the former Yugoslavia.

A side note here about prostitution: Personally, I don't have any moral or ethical problem with the simple idea of fucking for money, if it's done freely, without strings, oppression, or abuse. Of course, it never is.

Coercive prostitution is the least of problems in the Balkans. Violent abuse of women and children, similar sexual abuse, rape and murder are all daily crimes throughout the region. These get our attention, and they also cry out seductively to the Wyrm and its minions. A handful of Black Fury packs roam the countryside, noses to the air for crimes against Gaia.

Two years ago, Kelonoke Wildhair of the Sept of Bygone Visions established two important alliances for us in the Balkans. First, she spoke with leadership of the Red Talons of the area, who were already engaged in missions similar to those of our packs: defend the Wyld, fight the Wyrm, scout out particularly Wyrm-blasted battlefields and atrocity sites. She made certain that our packs and Red Talon packs would cooperate where possible and stay out of one another's way where cooperation was not feasible. We still don't entirely approve of some Red Talon tactics: they are entirely too willing to rip human throats first and ask questions later for my tastes; but for the time being they are allies.

Next, Wildhair approached Margrave Konietzko of the Shadow Lords' Sept of the Night Sky in Wallachia. The Shadow Lords rightfully laid claim to the Balkans, and technically the Furies and Red Talons violated that territory by taking action there. Wildhair suggested that the Shadow Lords join the Furies' and Talons' alliance, the better to keep a presence throughout the region. Though Konietzko drove a hard bargain, the Margrave appeared to be honorable, and, as a side benefit, genuinely respected Wildhair and her sisters. After a full day's negotiations over territory rights and relative ranks, Konietzko and Wildhair agreed to an alliance.

Today all three tribes patrol the Balkans, hunting out criminals against the Mother and making examples of them as well as making war against Wyrm creatures. Wildhair herself is sometimes seen in the southern parts of the treaty area. Accusations occasionally fly back and forth that one pack or another has pre-emptively slain suspicious-looking humans, but from what I hear, most of those attacks come from human-hating Talons or brutal Shadow Lords. The Furies largely avoid such things, paying more attention to real criminals.

The War for Russia

Over the last ten years, Russia has been little more than a battlefield for the Garou, as the Wyrm-ridden beast Baba Yaga dropped the Shadow Curtain around the nation's Umbra and unleashed hell upon the Gaia-loving creatures trapped within.

Better werewolves than I have already told this tale in song and in epic poem; I won't bore you with all of the details. I am more concerned with the history of the Black Furies, after all. The most important thing for our tribe was the loss of Mother's Pride, a proud Fury and the leader of the Blood of the Sea Sept. Mother's Pride and her pack, a collection of Mothers and Crones from the lands around the Russian Black Sea coast, were the lynchpin in Black Fury leadership throughout Russia. The pack, Fiery Axe, was destroyed fighting the Wyrm-dragon (in Russian, "Zmei") called Gregornous. A terrifying beast, it took many packs of Garou to finally drag the thing to its demise, and it killed many of those when its death-throes spewed acid venom for a hundred meters in every direction.

The war is now over, mostly. Baba Yaga is dead, and her greatest minions have been vanquished. The Blood of the Sea Sept no longer stands among the first and strongest in Russia; that torch has been passed to other tribes in the wake of Fiery Axe's destruction. A relative youth, Tatiana, now leads the Sept. I hear whispers that Tatiana lacks the strength to rule the Garou of such a strong Caern; ambitious Fury packs from Greece to Wyoming look eastward even now. Worse, with the Silver Fangs' and Get of Fenris' victory over the Hag, members of those two tribes look greedily toward the Black Sea.

African Brushfire Wars

Africa, too, has its share of supernatural danger. The most important African lands to us are in the Congo, divided into the Republic of Congo and, confusingly, the Democratic Republic of Congo. Black Fury freebooters found two unclaimed Caerns in the Congo around 1900, and promptly opened them, christening them the Dark River Caern and the Blessed Home Caern.

Revolution in Zaire (which became the Democratic Republic of Congo) in the late 1990s got the Furies' attention right quick. Neither of our two Caerns was particularly strong, and in fact both served primarily as staging areas for Furies to give what aid they could to the local human population. The war brought out the worst in humanity. Again. Our sisters have fought when they had to in the Congo (and throughout Africa) but for the most part, we're just too few. Africa's not our territory, so we find it frustratingly difficult to accomplish anything there.

Disappearance of Medusa

Medusa, one of the Gorgons, dropped out of sight right around high summer of 2000. It took a little time for this fact to bubble out to the tribe at large; only the Theurges of packs dedicated to the Gorgons even noticed this, and it took them a couple of months to realize that something was wrong. Her sisters won't say what has happened, though of course they aren't the most talkative of Pegasus's children.

The situation is rather complicated, though. It seems that packs that previously followed the Gorgons as a single totem, five spirits in one joint role, now only hear responses from one of the five sisters. Most of the packs don't know what to make of this; the four active sisters (Euryale, Stheno, Helena, and Isthmene [sic]) say that they no longer think or act with one mind, and each has happily chosen a few packs to shepherd individually. This is all happening so quickly that I honestly don't know if Medusa herself has chosen any packs of her own — or even if she *can*.

The Inner Calyx might know better what is going on, but their secretive nature keeps them from getting a lot done. Most packs devoted to the Gorgons are too busy waging war to find out where their missing grandmother has gone; perhaps a younger pack would be able to find her more easily. Theurges suggest that Medusa may have suffered a wound at the hands of Weaver-spirits and retreated to our Tribal Homelands to heal, but I'm not sure about it. It's all happening too quickly to know for sure what has happened.

The Metamorphic Plague

Around the same time as the disappearance of Medusa, a curious syndrome was first reported among our sisters in Mexico. The Crones call it the Metamorphic Plague; it is a disease that infects those who expose themselves recklessly to Wyld energies. We love and revere the Wyld first among the Triat and third only to Gaia and Luna, please understand, so the suggestion of a Wyld disease among the Black Furies was not something that we took lightly.

We aren't sure where the Plague first sprang up: it does not seem likely that any wilderness on Earth is remote and pristine enough to allow "too much" of the Wyld to push its way into the Realm. I'm not certain there can *be* "too much" of the Wyld, especially not in light of the Namer's and Wyrm's depredations. But the Metamorphic Plague seems to be just that, too much Wyld energy in a Garou's spirit. However, now the Plague slowly passes from Fury to Fury, and the Outer Calyx is divided as to how to deal with the disease.

The Metamorphic Plague manifests subtly; it does not tear great rents across a Garou soul, or turn her into a gibbering freak. It changes its victim's inner being without drastically changing the outer. One or two of the werewolf's strongest personality traits first change: a Mother known for her tenderness and devotion to protecting the weak develops a cynical streak overnight, and within another day petitions her sept's alpha to let her join an avenging pack, for instance — or the other way around. Later, subtle physical changes — eye color, skin complexion — manifest and the Garou begins to lose her memory. Finally, an entirely new — apparently false — set of memories slides into place as the Garou takes on a new identity and role. These werewolves remain Garou, and they remain Black Furies: Pegasus does not reject them, and they still hold onto our ideals. They just become new people. Some Furies, it is whispered, even become male. That last might be bullshit, and even if it isn't I don't know if Pegasus still accepts them.

We have plenty of useless theories about this. Perhaps victims of the Plague change because Gaia needs them to be other people. Perhaps the changes to the Gauntlet and the lands of the dead have pushed ancestor-spirits' essences out onto their descendants. We don't exactly know what's happening. We know it's contagious: whole packs have been changed. We don't know a lot more than that.

The Marian Cult

Oh, we have nothing to do with the recent rise in status of the "Virgin Mother," Mary, the mother of Christ, in the Roman Catholic Church. Honest. We aren't responsible for the calls for her to be recognized as "Co-Redemptrix, Mediatrix, and Advocate," we have *no idea* how the Pope gets away

with all of his vehement pro-Marianism. We find it just *shocking*. It isn't as though we have agents in the Church, after all.

Hee, hee, hee.

This one is a big win for us. Let me preface the rest of this discussion with the note that I find the phrase "Virgin Mother" to be repulsive; it's one of the most obvious and repressive symptoms of the neuroses that infect the patriarchally religious. But there is a movement in the Church to elevate Mary's status, maybe not to an equal footing with the big JC, but a hell of a lot closer to him. The scholars who advocate this stance feel that Mary intercedes with the God person on behalf of humans, and is responsible for helping humans find grace. Interlock this movement with the last fifty years of Marian sightings, prophecies, and so on, and you've got an upswelling of feminist furor in the Catholic Church.

We have to pay kudos to the Order of Our Merciful Mother on this one. No, despite my sarcasm, I really won't suggest that the Black Furies are responsible for this great change in the church's stance and policies; the patriarchal eunuchs themselves certainly play the most important role. But the Order has been tugging the church back toward a more equal footing for more than *a thousand years*. It's good to see the efforts paying off.

RGM

Chapter Two: Pegasus' Flight

"To us, the world is a teacher,
A healer, our Mother,
A weaver of a web of life that keeps us all alive."
— Rumors of the Big Wave, "Burning Times"

Thou Art Goddess

Where... she wonders. Before the thought is complete, the question is answered.

"With us, young friend," comes the response, and Anxi is surprised to find that the voice is male.

Who... she thinks. Again, the answer comes before the question.

"Friends, or teachers. You are the new cub staying at the Sept of Bygone Visions, yes?" This voice is female, but Anxi still isn't sure who's speaking to her. All she remembers is lying down by the Pool to rest after training with a labrys. But here — wherever "here" is — she feels rested, and ready to begin... if only she knew what was beginning.

"Would you rather see us?" asks a third voice, this one also female. Anxi can only nod, and suddenly her vision clears.

Three Furies stand before her on a grassy plain. She cannot hear the sea, and knows therefore that she must be dreaming — the sea's roar is never out of earshot on Ecube. She sizes up the three strange beings. One sits patiently in Lupus form, her glossy black coat shining in the sun. Her eyes betray youthful energy and boundless love, and Anxi knows her name: Amethyst Wing-Mender, a Theurge.

The next is a dark-skinned woman, not Greek — Italian, possibly. She stands, arms folded, a slight smile on her lips but impatience in her eyes. She is called Carlotta Parts-the-Mists, Anxi realizes, and she is a Galliard.

The last — the man — towers above them in Crinos form. His arms are grotesquely long; his knuckles touch the ground though he stands at full height. However, his fur matches Amethyst's, and Anxi marvels at the knowledge that this metis — this man — is Symon World-Reacher, a Philodox of the Black Furies.

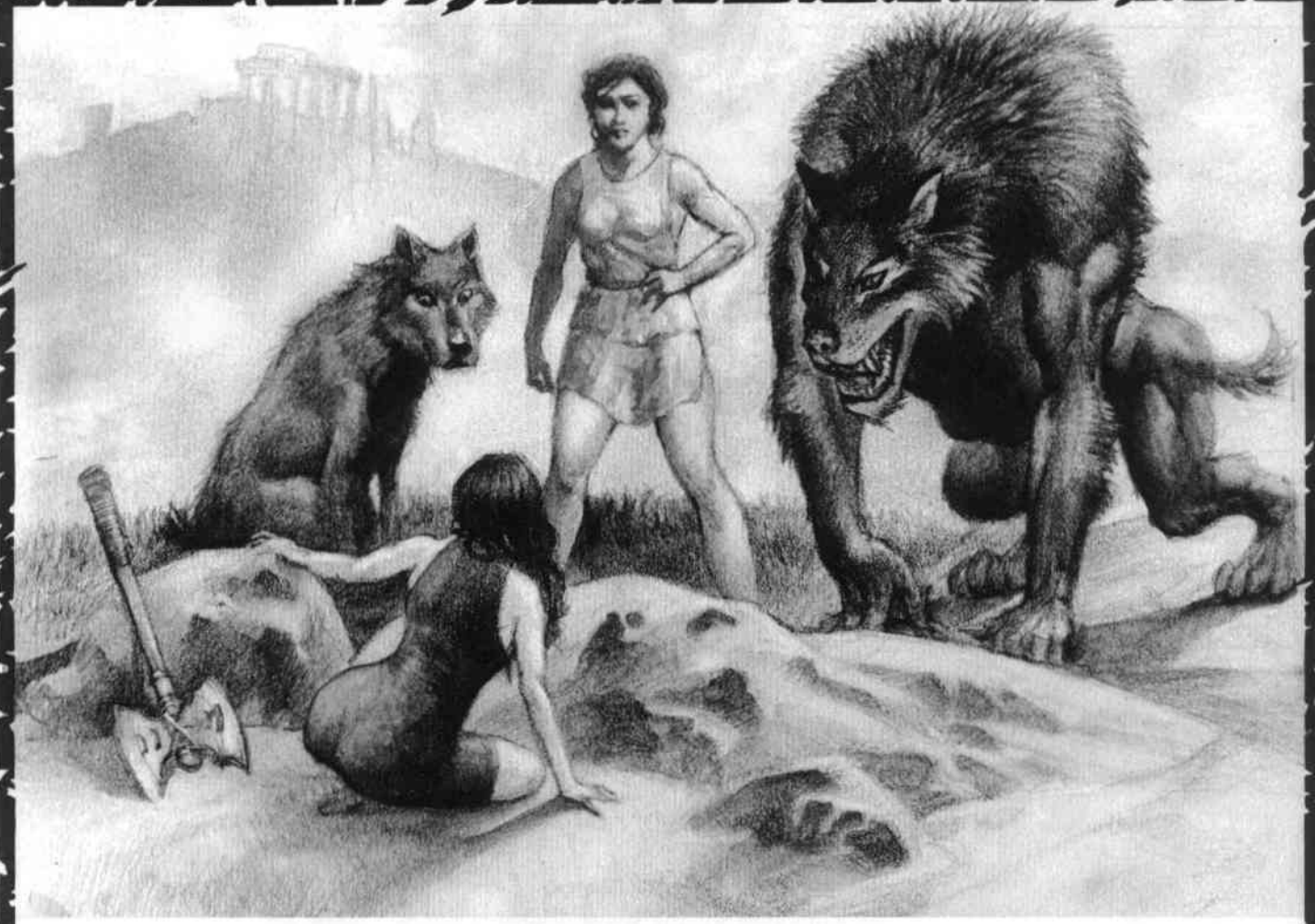
"But how can you be here?" asks the cub. "I mean, are you on the island? Am I?"

"The island is a place of the Wyld, as you know," answers Carlotta. "Sometimes, Pegasus — or maybe even Gaia herself — chooses a young one like you to be taught by others still living. And here we are."

"Only possible here," pipes Amethyst happily.

"Teach me of what?" Anxi realizes that she has found her voice, finally.

"The world," answers Symon, and nods to the lupus to begin the lesson.



The world is a big place, child, and — what? I'm sorry, I didn't mean to offend. Not "child," then, but "sister." Better? Good, then let's continue.

As I said, the world is vast. Finding one's place within it is done on so many different levels, it is hard to know where to begin. Since you have heard the history of the Furies, legendary and recent, perhaps you would like to know more of what it means to belong to Pegasus' brood? Good! Then let's take flight!

The Great Mother

Of course, the Triptych — the triple Goddess — is probably familiar to you. The Divine is at once Maiden, Mother, and Crone. Where Gaia Herself is concerned, this three-fold identity explains the changing of seasons and the progression of the world. We lupus understand it just as we understand everything else: without thought. You've got a long way to go, sister, before you can know without thinking. If you ever conceive and carry a child, you will.

I'm sorry. I'm easily sidetracked. Where was I? Yes, the threefold Goddess in Her many forms. Well, Gaia aside, Luna also presents many faces. Our auspices spring from her differing forms. The most obvious and important "three," however, must be the Triat. Every tribe sees the Triat in their own terms, and it's all true. We see the Triat as the Fates.

Moirai Clotho — The Wyld

Called "the Spinner," yes, but not to be confused with the Weaver. As you've been told, weaving is creative work, taking several threads and creating something new and colorful. It's one of the many human-things I'd like to learn, but not today. Anyway, Moirai Clotho spins the thread. She appears as the Maiden, full of life and promise, and from her comes the *possibility*, unrealized, of life.

Possibility is a dangerous thing, sister. Every day the possibility exists that you will find some great treasure — a companion, a fetish, riches, secrets or whatever is important to you. But the possibility is also there that you will die or grow ill, that the Mother will stop turning, or whatever else might frighten you. No matter if something has or has not happened, the chance exists, and Moirai Clotho might choose today to seize upon it. The Wyld understands the last days better than some tribes think.

Lachesis — The Weaver

Oh, I know some of our sisters insist on calling it the "Namer" and referring to it as a man. I say, male wolves don't count or build, but humans of both sexes do these

Trinities

Carlotta speaks about trinity:

The number three has a mystical significance to all Garou. It is the number of the Triat, reflected again in the three breeds of the Garou and the three virtues of Garou society — Honor, Glory and Wisdom, for those of you who slept through that lesson. Among the Black Furies, the number three carries even greater meaning. We Furies are inextricably intertwined with Greek myth and legendry, which is replete with trinities and triple-goddesses. In more recent years, we have found that goddess myths from around the world fit nicely into this three-legged framework; most Furies have welcomed these multicultural expressions of feminine power brought by new sisters and Kin. It is most important to remember this: whatever her background, be it classical Greece or neo-pagan California, a Fury feels the influence of these trinities in our tribal society and her relationship with the spirit world.

One of the most obvious groups of three is the original Furies, known to the Greeks as the Erinyes, from whom we take our name. Their names were Alecto, meaning "Unceasing Anger;" Tisiphone, meaning "Avenger of Murder;" and Megaera, meaning "Jealous." I see you are confused by the last appellation: Megaera was not jealous in the sense that she coveted her sisters' possessions or loves. Rather, she jealously guarded the right of the Erinyes to exact vengeance on transgressors. Divine justice is not something that can be safely left in the hands of mortal men and women — or even certain sky goddesses, as Athena's blindness showed.

I see that you recognize these names. That is good. You should have heard these many times by this point in your education, since they are among our greatest heroines. Many Black Furies have taken their names in tribute down the ages — perhaps some of you will eventually be deserving of such esteemed titles. Our legends say that the Erinyes sprang from Gaia where her body was soaked with the blood of those slain by their kin. Some Furies will insist that this origin means that Erinyes predate the First Daughters, the Gorgons, as the progenitors of our tribe. But myths — ours as well as those of the Greeks — are a dangerous place to hunt for "facts." I personally believe that, if the Erinyes were the first of our kind, they had neither the time nor the inclination to produce a tribe from their loins. It truly does not matter either way. We are the Black Furies, and the Erinyes are our mothers in spirit if not in blood.

What does matter is that when the Erinyes were slain and returned to Gaia, their spirits were, for the most part, lost to us. They were too suffused with vengeance and the raw power of the Wyld to take their places as ancestor spirits or totems. Some Furies claim to have met the spirit of one or another of the Erinyes in the Deep Umbra, in places where the Wyld is strong — a fearsome spirit that coalesced briefly from raw energy and dissipated again once its message was delivered. Such encounters are not described as pleasant. The Inner Calyx possesses a ritual that calls, or perhaps forces, the spirits of Alecto, Tisiphone and Megaera out of the Wyld and infuses them into the bodies of three Black Furies for the purpose of exacting a terrible vengeance on a deserving target. This rite is never, ever performed lightly; it has never been performed in my lifetime, nor in that of my mother or grandmother. Once they have destroyed the transgressor chosen by the Inner Calyx, the Erinyes continue to punish violators of Gaia's laws until the Garou vessels that carry them are slain. They cannot be swayed or influenced in their choice of subsequent targets, and the results are not always what the Inner Calyx would desire.

things. I think that Naming exists independent of sex. Lachesis, in legend, was female, as were all the Fates. She appeared as the Matron, still alive and able, but tempered and practical. She measured the thread of life, putting limits on Moirai Clotho's precious possibility. While limits and strictures are frightening to many, I take peace knowing that purposes exist for all things. This is what our auspices do, yes? You don't see many Ragabash trying to lead moots, and it isn't because they *can't*, it's because that isn't written on their thread, so to speak.

The problem comes when limits become absolute. It's a human mind-twister — and I love mind-twisters — that the only rule to which there is no exception is that there's an exception to every rule. But Lachesis doesn't see it that way. She doesn't wish for exceptions, she wishes every thread to be the length she measured, not an inch more or less. And so she is sad and angry because the world is so confused and messy, and tries harder and harder to bring the world's thread into line. I do wish she would put down her measuring stick and simply measure the threads by sight, rather than attempting such exactness.

Atropos — The Wyrm

Again, most tribes see the Wyrm as male. They say that, like man, the Wyrm cannot create, and this leads them to believe that it can only destroy, and therefore so can man. I said before I love mind-twisters, but it's good to know when to stop twisting your mind.

Atropos is the Crone, the wizened old woman who cuts the threads of life. She frightens us more than Lachesis, often, because despite our talk about living forever through our cubs and returning to guide our descendants, no one really wants to be over. Atropos does not give us the option, however. She cuts the thread and in that instant, we are all the same, man and woman, wolf and human. What happens after is not the province of the Fates.

Many legends speak of the Weaver trying to enslave the Wyrm, and the Wyrm going mad trying to get free. Others state that the Weaver tries to weave *everything* into its web, and the Wyrm went mad trying to keep up with its duties. But when the Triat is viewed as the Fates, neither of these truly makes sense. I cannot begin to explain why Atropos feels it necessary to burn and despoil the threads of the world before cutting them. Perhaps she has been replaced?

Pegasus

As one of the tribes that holds a "mythical" animal as a totem, we enjoy special kinship with the Red Talons, Stargazers, and Children of Gaia (the tribes of the Pure Lands venerate totems that represent unique creatures, as do the Get of Fenris and the Shadow Lords). Pegasus is a totem of Respect, not War, and that's something that many Furies could stand to bear in mind a little more strongly.

You've heard the story of Bellerophon, of course, so I don't need to repeat it. However, recall that Pegasus killed Bellerophon when he tried to claim dominion over her. Pegasus does not brook that kind of arrogance from *any* Black Fury, or any other Garou, for that matter. She is free to do as she pleases, and while requests are perfectly acceptable, summons likely bring down her wrath.

The Furies and Pegasus are perfectly suited to each other, really. War is not natural to us, nor is it to Pegasus. However, some think that one must love what one does well, and this means that the Furies and Pegasus — extremely capable warriors both — are labeled "violent" or "warlike." Pegasus was born to fly free and to protect the helpless (*not* the weak), and that kind of freedom resonates in the breast of any Garou, male or female, who looks to Pegasus as a totem.

As a totem, Pegasus demands her children protect helpless females of all races. The distinction between "weak" and "helpless" is an important one: the strongest being on Gaia can be chained and thus rendered helpless for all its strength. However, a weak being will submit without chains, and Pegasus has no desire to help those

who will not help themselves. The Get of Fenris have trouble with this distinction; they seem to feel that not dying in the face of adversity marks one as "weak," and the notion of needing protection and love — even though we all did as infants — strikes them as pathetic. Pegasus, it is said, long ago gave up trying to explain the difference to Fenris, and does not accept the Get as her children. This, I feel, is sad, because despite all of the antipathy between our tribes, the Fenrir have as much loyalty to Gaia as we do and have much to teach (and learn). The fact that Pegasus — or indeed any Incarna — makes such rules is evidence of Lachesis' frustration, I think.

Pegasus' Brood

You are not a Theurge, sister. Pity — you may never know some of the wondrous spirits that call Pegasus mother, and the Black Furies sister.

Well, of course you've heard of the Gorgons. With the disappearance of Medusa, however, her sisters have been taking action more independently just lately. I'm not sure what, if anything, Pegasus thinks about this turn of events, but I'm sure we'll find out soon.

Panther also serves Pegasus, although I'm not sure why. One guess I've heard is that Panther slunk away from Lion when the White Howlers fell, not wishing to join Lion in his shame, and Pegasus adopted her.

Pegasus' brood includes many other spirits. A lot of them come from (or inspired) Greek legends, even if the legends didn't quite get it all right. Centaurs are usually portrayed as brutish and slovenly, and that might well be true, but you can bet that Pegasus doesn't take any guff from them. They're her ground troops, and they know that she's in charge. Nevertheless, they're unabashedly male; I think that they and the Chimaera are the only two male spirits in Pegasus' brood.

A lot of Pegasus' brood represent various parts of Woman, from the bloody Haima to the Triptych herself. You might find a spirit representing the Youngest Daughter's Rebellion, or the fear of the first-time mother, or the pain of a virgin. All of Pegasus' brood, however, are strong, and most of them are mysterious.

Auspices

I said earlier that Luna's changing faces give us our roles — these roles are written on our threads, I think. I was born under the crescent moon, when barely a sliver of Luna shows and all the world wonders and asks. But all of the lady's faces are equally important, so consider each one — after all, if you join a true pack (one member from each auspice) you'll want to understand them.

No Moon — Luna Cries

When no moon at all shines down, Luna hides and weeps. The sun might blaze on proudly, no matter how much pain he feels, but Luna does not. And here on Earth, those Garou born under the dark moon ask, "What displeases Luna, and what can we change to please her?" Since she doesn't answer, the Ragabash seek to change everything.

Change hurts. The Ragabash know this. They don't wish to hurt anyone, but sometimes they feel that change — questioning what is to find out what should not be — is more important that pain. The Ragabash that asks the right question, that infuriates just enough to grant wisdom, does a great service to the tribe and to the Garou. Rumors abound that to be chosen as First Daughter of the Inner Calyx, a Ragabash must make Luna smile during her dark cycle.

Crescent Moon — Luna Ponders

Still fresh from her cycle of tears, Luna begins to question all of existence. Why does a cat-spirit hunt a mouse-spirit? Why does her sister Gaia turn just so? Why do the Garou war on the other Fera? No easy answers here, but those born under this face seek them anyway. The questions do not always need to be answered, often just asking them is enough.

Theurges and Ragabash both question, but in different ways. No-moons question the status quo in hopes of reaffirming it or changing it as necessary. Crescent moons, instead, ask questions out of curiosity. If the answers lead to great spiritual truths, wonderful. If they lead only to more questions or to simple answers (I remember well learning the answer to "What do bees smell like?"), then that also is learning and therefore good.

Half Moon — Luna Speaks

As she learns, Luna steps even more away from darkness and begins to speak. She speaks of what she thought while weeping, and what she learned while questioning. The Philodox, likewise, is expected to speak fact and wisdom (one, if not both at once) and learn from what she sees and experiences.

Where the Theurge seeks answers (which lead to more questions, as we all know) the Philodox seeks truth. Of all the auspices, I think, with all respect to Symon, that Lachesis favors the half-moon. After all, law, including the Litany, is a thing of the Weaver, we can all agree. This doesn't make it bad, so long as the law is respected in spirit as well as (or sometimes instead of) in letter. This, also, is part of the Philodox's job: To ensure that any recriminations against "Litany-breakers" are indeed deserved. As I said earlier, *every* rule has an exception, and if one hasn't been found yet, it will. While I personally can't think of any excuse to allow a caern to be violated, someday a Garou might have a legitimate defense for such behavior. If so, it would fall upon a Philodox to decide the truth of the matter.

Gibbous Moon — Luna Laughs

Deciding truth and dispensing justice is a daunting and rather grave task. As Luna tires of speaking truth and sees how many tangles and snarls the truth and fact creates, she laughs, stepping forward into the light even more. Galliards are born into this laughter, and take up their lyres, looms, flutes, or voices in reverence to that sound.

Don't think, of course, that all Galliards are comedians. Very few are, in fact. Laughter doesn't have to be mirthful; it can be bitter or rueful as well. Sometimes, one Galliard told me, we laugh only because the alternative is to cry. Black Furies born under this face of Luna try to make sense of the facts and laws that the Philodox provides, and to make them accessible. Over the years, many stories have surfaced about love between Garou, about caerns falling or being built, about battles with great Wyrm-beasts, and so on and on. How many of these stories actually happened? How many were simply constructed to illustrate the dangers of breaking the Litany, or even to entertain one's sept at a moot? It isn't important. Take from a story the wisdom that is in it; one of humanity's biggest problems, I think, is that many of them take their legends too seriously.

Full Moon — Luna Acts

For four cycles, she has said much but done little. But now, as the full glory of her face is revealed, Luna acts. She becomes Artemis the Hunter, running through the wilds with her hounds, and the Ahroun are beside her as her attendants. To be born under the full moon is to be a warrior among warriors, and the Ahroun accept that charge with gusto.

But blood isn't Luna's only desire during this phase. It's not even the most important. What is important is action: That she (and the Furies) move and run, do instead of speak, taking all they've learned and drawing some sort of conclusion. Contemplation is good, but too much of it causes the topic to become irrelevant. It isn't necessary to consider all angles, state the Ahroun, merely enough of them. And it is the Ahroun who decide when talking is done and action must follow. As we are a race of warriors, often the call to action is one of "Rage!"

The swift, decisive action of the Ahroun leads sometimes to mistakes, which then leads to the desire for correction so typical of the Ragabash. And so on and on it goes. Beautiful, isn't it?

The Rite of Passage

The first ordeal that marks you as a Black Fury varies, depending on the nature of your sept. Most septs, however, include tests of judgment, vision, fury, and mystery.

With all our talk of threes, why four tests? Well, because one of them isn't so much a test as…I'll come back to it; it's rather unique.

Hidden Warriors — Children of Eclipse

Symon World-Reacher speaks of those born during eclipses:

As you probably know, lunar eclipses only happen during full moons. This means that any Garou born during an eclipse is an Ahroun. So how does that fit in to Amethyst's quite poetic depiction of the auspices?

An Ahroun is an Ahroun, and the Hidden Warriors are still warriors, but they carry an inquisitiveness that is rarely seen in "normal" full-moons. They rely on stealth rather than forthright combat, and are often brilliant, if unorthodox, tacticians. They are also frequently moody and less prone to Rage than their sisters — but more prone to Harano.

Carlotta, I'm sure, could regale you with stories of Rails-Against-Thunder, the great Ahroun who turned back a storm that threatened to destroy a seaside caern on Crete. I will not attempt to tell the tale, but I will mention that although she turned back the storm, she was plagued with nightmares ever after, and always wondered if the storm wasn't Gaia's way of altering the caern in some painful, but necessary way.

The test of judgment hearkens back to our role as avengers. We're presented with a situation, either acted out by other Garou, as a Vista in the Umbra, or sometimes even in real life. The cub has to decide if action is necessary and what form it should take. For example, a homid cub might be taken to a school (maybe even her own) and shown a group of children tormenting a lone student. The Fury must decide how to not only punish the bullies, but also make sure it doesn't happen again — which requires teaching the outcast to defend herself.

The test of vision often takes the form of a riddle or spirit-quest. In the case of a quest, the cub is never taken farther than the Penumbra and is always chaperoned. Usually, however, the test of vision takes place in the Realm; the elders have no desire to lose a new Garou to the dangers of the Umbra! The test can be a simple as gazing into a pool and reporting what it tells you, or as complex as listening to a long, long story and remembering the details.

Finally, the test of fury. More than a simple fight, the Fury is tested to see if she can use her Rage effectively, without letting it control her. Often, an elder will goad a young Fury to frenzy to see if she will repress it, lose control, or ride the winds of frenzy without a care. Whatever the result, it tells the elders much about the cub's prowess and faults.

The test of mystery, as I mentioned, isn't really a test. It's more of an omen — the Fury takes part in the Elusian mysteries, drinking the sacred wine and reveling in the visions and pain it causes. Ah, you experienced this on your Rite — then you know of the ordeal.

The Elusian Mysteries

The Elusian mysteries have their roots in the worship of Demeter, the goddess of grain and the harvest. The seasonal rites involved were dedicated to recognizing the departure of Persephone, Demeter's daughter, as she left her mother for the winter and descended to her throne as wife of Hades, the lord of the dead.

Celebrants would travel from Athens to Elusieus, where a chosen few would enter the temple, fast, rest, and generally prepare for a religious revelation. They would break their fast by drinking a special potion called kykeon, made from grain and colored purple. Relatively few accounts survive, since most initiates kept a vow of secrecy. But some told how terror, shaking, and sweating overcame them, and had powerful hallucinations where the greatest mysteries of the universe were revealed to them. Many of the great philosophers of the day, including Socrates, Plato, Sophocles, Euripides, and Homer were initiated into the Elusian mysteries. Some modern scholars believe that one ingredient of kykeon was ergot. The fact that it was made from grain, and that water in which ergots have been soaked turns a deep purple color, are clues. Also, it is believed that the powerful effect of the drink must have been due to something far more potent than ordinary wine.

Ergot, as it happens, has long been used as an aid in childbirth. A small amount ground up and boiled in water would hasten labor, and when used after birth would constrict the blood vessels and help to prevent hemorrhage in the mother. In Germany it is still called "Mutterkorn." The Black Furies have been known to awaken ergot in order to maximize its effectiveness, both as an ingredient in kykeon and as a medicine.

Life as a Fury

The scene shifts beneath Anxi's feet. Where before the four Furies stood in a field, now they stand in a clearing. Huge trees surround them. Stones, apparently meant as seating, lie on the outer edges of a circle. The glyphs carved into the stones mark this place as a sept, though Anxi cannot decide which one, or even what country they might be it. Amethyst lies curled up on one of the stones, tired from her lesson. Symon, the metis, taps Anxi's shoulder.

Breeds

Amethyst has spoken very well so far, but if we're to consider the three breeds and their place in our tribe, I think that I should have the floor. Does it make you uncomfortable, sister? You may call me "sister" as well, if you like; enough other Furies do. No? "Brother," then? Or perhaps just "Symon?"

No need to get angry or troubled. I'm a member of the tribe, the same as you. Perhaps you'd like to know why the Black Furies accept their male metis but not fertile males, and sometimes not even female metis? Well, we'll get to that.

To begin with, the bearing of children, whether babe or pup, is never painless. Even though the Black Furies have natural advantages of strength and endurance greater than a human or wolf mother could possess, they are not immune to either the pain of labor or the many inconveniences of pregnancy. Most wouldn't have it any other way: giving birth is a gift that Gaia gave to woman alone. Man, with his tools of technology and science, can rob some significance and meaning from the event by smothering it with hospitals and medications and sterile doctors, but they have not yet managed to steal the miraculous act itself.

Human, and therefore homid, pregnancies last for nine months. The stereotypical malady suffered by pregnant women is morning sickness. For most women, the nausea and vomiting never causes more than annoyance; but for an unlucky few, including some Garou, the vomiting can become so severe as to cause dehydration, malnutrition, and weakness. All the stamina in the world can't help you when your stomach mysteriously stops accepting food.

Other complications are a bit more insidious, and of particular danger to the Garou. Even before the pregnancy "shows" and causes obvious mobility problems, the mother's body is changing. Her center of balance moves, the muscles of her stomach wall weaken to allow the uterus to protrude, the ligaments holding her bones together relax to provide that little extra give in the pelvis. Even before she knows she is pregnant, these subtle changes may hamper a warrior who has trained her body for strength and precision. In a pitched battle with the Wyrm's spawn, even the slightest misstep can be deadly.

Later in pregnancy, the demands of the unborn child draw even more heavily on the mother's stores of energy. The hardiest Fury may find herself exhausted; every extra ounce of energy she finds, her body happily shuttles to the growing baby. While the Black Furies venerate motherhood, they also abhor personal weakness, and it is not uncommon for a Fury to slide into a hormone-bolstered depression as her pregnancy

progresses. The dangerous flip side of depression is Rage, which the mother must resist; the inevitable shape-shift of frenzy will most likely kill the child she carries.

Labor and delivery can be excruciatingly painful for human and homid mothers. The human head, stuffed full of the brains that set us apart from the rest of the animal kingdom, is as large as it can be and still fit through the mother's pelvis. Sometimes, unfortunately, it's too large, or is not quite in the right position; childbirth has historically been the leading cause of death for women of childbearing age, and in many parts of the world it still is. The early hours of labor are usually just uncomfortable, but as labor progresses contractions grow increasingly painful. The actual pushing of the baby through the birth canal can be as quick as ten minutes or it may take hours. The average first-time mother can expect an ordeal of fourteen hours.

The Black Furies typically shun hospital births, most preferring to give birth at home with a Fury or Kinfolk midwife. Some on the high-tech end may opt for Kin-run birthing centers, while some seek out the other extreme by heading for the Wyldest woods they can find. In any case, the Black Furies know all too well the motives of pharmaceutical companies — greed at best, and far more sinister motives at worst. Most of us refuse anesthetics during labor; even caesarian sections are commonly performed without pain relief — after all, the mother can heal relatively quickly once the baby is delivered. Fury mothers also typically nurse their children or, if that is not possible for some reason, find a Kinfolk wetnurse for them. A Black Fury who is found to have taken anesthetics in labor or fed her child artificial formulas can expect scorn and shunning, or even a sound beating at the hands of her sisters.

Lupus and wolf mothers have it far easier. Gestation is a mere nine weeks, during which the mother-to-be experiences the same physical disorientation and exhaustion described above, but avoids morning sickness. When her time arrives, the female secludes herself in an underground den. Without the ludicrous head circumference to pelvis size ratio that plagues human reproduction, labor and delivery are usually free of complications, but can be arduously long — the early stages of labor stretch from hours to days, and the birth of each of two to eleven pups takes approximately an hour. The pups are born blind and deaf, and are completely reliant on their mother for their first two months of life.

Even though wolf births are relatively problem-free, the labors of lupus Furies are usually attended by a midwife — every potential lupus pup and the mother herself are ever more precious as the breed declines. Fury midwives attend the labors of Kinfolk wolves, when they are aware of events and the mother's pack will allow it. Finally, the

Formula Companies in the World of Darkness

Carlotta speaks of poison:

Everyone agrees that breast milk is best for babies: doctors, researchers, pharmaceutical companies, and parenting gurus. But nobody makes money from breastfeeding. Sure, somebody can make a little cash selling how-to books, bras with funny hooks and latches, or other paraphernalia, but the real money comes from selling something people use up and have to come back to buy more.

So how do formula companies get people to buy an obviously inferior product? They fill baby magazines with images of happy white families gathered around beautiful bottle-sucking babies, while the images of breastfeeding feature minority women without wedding rings. They give "seminar" trips in exotic locales to hospital administrators and ply the nurses with free pens and coffee mugs in return for their complicity in making sure every new mother leaves the hospital with a bag full of formula. They buy privileged patient information from doctor's offices to carefully time doorstep deliveries of free formula to coincide with an infant's growth spurts, when a mother may panic that she's not providing her baby with enough milk. They compile free "how-to" tip booklets for breastfeeding that make it sound overwhelmingly difficult. They sponsor episodes of TV dramas in which young mothers kill their babies trying to feed them naturally, with special attention to the unattractively cast breastfeeding zealot. They set the terms of the national dialogue on the issue, stating that breastfeeding makes babies smarter and less likely to fall ill, rather than acknowledge that their product makes babies dumber and sicker.

If that weren't enough, they ship their poisonous product to the third world, marketing it with images of prosperous American families. Poor families, wanting the American best for their babies, spend a huge percentage of their monthly income on powdered formula and mix it with local unsafe water, and their babies sicken and die. They send cases and cases of artificial milk for disaster relief, knowing full well that it will not only go to the orphaned, but to young mothers who will be forced to buy it once both their milk and the disaster supplies have dried up.

And people buy it. They buy it and put it in their babies' mouths in spite of the fact that it tastes terrible, is expensive, and isn't subject to scientific testing or oversight.

Sound familiar? It should. It only gets worse when the Wyrm actually takes a hand.

Furies also care for those wolves that have been chased out of their packs for mating with Garou. Whether their fellow wolves can smell the odd nature of the pups she carries, or simply are punishing her for breeding outside the group, the outcome is the same: the gravid wolf is left with no one to provide food or protection to her and her young. The midwife's role in such cases is limited, to avoid disturbing the wolf even further. She protects the birthing den, and leaves food outside it. Needless to say, the Black Furies are not kindly disposed to Garou males who impregnate wolves and leave the rest to fate.

And then there are the metis....

In nature, babies are born helpless. The young of predator animals are usually blind and sometimes deaf, their claws are soft and useless, their teeth small and blunt if present at all. Human babies are at the extreme end of the scale, requiring near-constant care for years before they are capable of surviving alone.

Metis are unnatural; they break all the natural rules. No one knows why the breeding of two Garou produces the warped and sterile metis. Most Furies see it as a sign of the Mother's displeasure, but quite a few see it as the unpredictable influence of the Wyld, or the creeping taint of the Wyrm. Regardless of the philosophical debate, the expectant mother of a metis cub has some immediate problems. A metis fetus may grow abnormally large, or malformed in some way that precludes a normal delivery (my own deformity, I'm told, did not make my birth uncommonly difficult). They may have extra parts — stumpy wings, antler or horn buds or sharp hooves. Many unborn metis sport working claws and teeth. Unless the cub is abnormally small, sickly, and premature (also all common afflictions), the mother will suffer through an excruciating labor and will likely suffer grave injury. The Furies share cautionary tales of a Litany-breaker slain under the light of the full moon, as a metis Ahroun cub ripped its way out of the offending mother's womb.

Abortions

The Black Furies are divided in their views on abortion. It is a topic that strikes deeply into their beliefs, forcing each Fury to evaluate her priorities — an unpleasant sort of introspection that people rarely enjoy. On one side of the balance hang the rights of women to control their own bodies, to decide their own futures — rights long in coming, and hard fought for. On the other side hang the lives of the unborn children, and a devotion to a natural way of life — which for women, almost always involves bearing

children. Toss in other concerns, like human overpopulation and the decline in Garou births among Kinfolk, and it is practically impossible to guess any given Fury's attitude toward the subject, even knowing how she feels on other matters.

I see you shift, as though troubled. Unpleasant, isn't it, having a sterile metis speak of breeding? Well, Anxi, think for just a moment how much more painful it must be for me, as I will never father my own children, never revel in the joy of creating a life with a lover. I am sorry for your discomfort, but you can just suffer through it a bit longer.

Human-Born Furies

The human-born among us are obviously the most numerous, and the most in touch with the modern world. As such, they tend to be the ones that fight for women's rights among humans. They understand the injustices that women are subjected to more keenly that the lupus or we metis ever could, because they have often experienced them.

This may be a good place to discuss sexuality, since it's much more commonly an issue among homids than among the other breeds. As you've probably noted, Furies often take lovers of their own gender, and would never condemn a human (or, presumably, a Garou) for doing the same. Although they understand that new life cannot come from such a union, they also see the "growing closer" that results, and feel that it has a place nearly as important. I have heard in recent years that some human scientists are trying to isolate the "gene" responsible for homosexuality. I am not a scientist, of course, but I have to question such a thing's existence. A woman might end up in the arms of another woman by many twists of fate, ranging from the pure and good (love and true desire) to the acceptable (curiosity) and even to the dangerous and unhealthy (anger or jealousy). I have a great deal of trouble believing in any kind of predestination for such a preference. And what of women (or men) who enjoy the favors of both sexes? Is there a "gene" for bisexuality as well? Hmph.

A woman's sexuality is hers, and can be a closely guarded secret or a gift to the world, as she chooses. Any who would attempt to dictate or restrict this choice had best watch his step, lest the Furies hear.

Wolf-Born Furies

Daughters of the pure Wyld, like my friend Amethyst here, are getting more and more scarce as the years go on. The natural wolves die or are imprisoned, making it difficult or impossible to breed with them. In some tribes, metis outnumber lupus, and although this is not the case among the Black Furies, I think that's only because we don't tend to birth metis as often as some others.

In the past, the leadership of the Furies was predominantly lupus. As a tribe so dedicated to the Wyld, that only makes sense, no? The lupus would guide the tribe by the pulls they felt from Gaia, and the tribe would respect their judgment. Now, however, the lupus are too few to lead, and I think that the voice of Gaia might well be lost in the din of the modern world. The lupus have lost much, and deserve our sympathy and love, but do not make the mistake of pitying them. Only the weak deserve pity.

Garou-Born Furies

Metis are conceived in sin and born in blood and pain. We're deformed, sterile, impure, and so forth. We're also more numerous than lupus werewolves nowadays, just because we're easier to make. From our end, we're reviled, even though I'm sure Carlotta could tell you stories about just as many heroic metis as other breeds — or just as many corrupt homids, for that matter. We're warriors without peer, since even if we lose the wolf we stay in the war form. And we can boast knowledge of the Garou Nation that most werewolves take years to obtain — because we grew up here. And yet we're still spit on as often as not. Unfair, isn't it?

Everything about the metis, especially in our tribe, rings of unfairness. Besides the things I've already mentioned, there's that little matter of how fertile males are sent packing (better deal than it used to be, I'm told) while we're allowed to stay. In fact, we're allowed to stay more often than female metis Furies. Why?

Ask three Furies and you'll get six different answers. But here's what I think. Sex and childbearing is all about responsibility. That's true for humans, who have to watch out for diseases and unwanted children. It's true for wolves, who breed with the strongest mates to ensure the survival of their pack. And it's very true for Garou, who have rather strict rules about breeding. So, if you conceive a metis child — which, remember, isn't a privilege — you are responsible for it. That means that foisting it off on another tribe might seem to be a bit of a cop-out, a shirking of responsibility. That means two options exist: kill the child or keep it. A tribe of women, of course, has a kind of collective maternal instinct, which means that often they decide to keep the child. "Normal" male Garou, when they're born to Black Furies, get adopted by other tribes with enthusiasm, usually. The Children of Gaia are the ones we most commonly "donate" male children to, but in days of yore, you might well see a black-furred Silver Fang. Oh, yeah, it happened. Not anymore, which is too bad, because I understand the tribe could really use it. Anyway, as the tribes spread out more and more, other tribes adopted Fury males, either deliberately or unwittingly. I've heard stories of Bone Gnawers, Silent Striders, and even Glass Walkers with Fury blood. And

then there's one very tragic story about a Garou born Fury and adopted by the Get....

Anyhow, we keep our metis males, and usually our metis females. It's more rare to cast them out than to keep them, but those we do keep don't get treated any differently than the males. All metis get shunned for their parents' crime, in our tribe and in others, but a female metis Black Fury is a barren womb, somehow less a woman. (Doesn't it occur to anyone that we male metis are equally afflicted?)

Kinfolk

So who produces the non-metis cubs? Well, Kinfolk, obviously. Now, here's a quick lesson. It takes a woman *and* a man to create a child, and if all the (fertile) Garou in the tribe are female, what does that make the Kin? Good guess.

Black Fury Kinfolk are the strong, sensitive types, most often. They have to be. They *can't* be prone to fits of anger, because a lover's spat might get bloody. But they don't live in fear; the Furies, on the whole, are smart enough not to take out any anti-male aggression on their own Kin. On the whole, anyway.

Monogamy happens, even among the Furies. Wolves mate for life, after all, and so long as the male Kinfolk realizes that marriage is bond, a pact, *not* a contract, most Furies have no objection to making a loving relationship permanent. Some Furies handfast, instead — they stay "married" for a lunar year and then decide where to go from there. Some have open marriages, so long as both partners are careful and honest. I have to say, however, that even if you managed to find two people mature enough to participate in a "polyamorous" relationship, you'd never find three.

As far as where our Kinfolk live, we've pretty much spread throughout the world. However, most of our remaining wolf Kin live in Greece, protected by one sept or another. I suppose there might be others in the New World, but I haven't heard of them.

Age Roles

If I might return to Carlotta's discussion of threes for a moment, there are three particular factors that define a Fury's role in the tribe. One is auspice, which we've talked about. One is breed, which we've also discussed. The third is something best described as an "age role," although it isn't exclusively based on age. Like your breed, it's a group of three — Maiden, Mother and Crone. Ah. You're familiar with the concept; yes, it's like Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, or if you prefer, Urd, Skuld and Verdanda. I'm glad they still teach the classics in public schools — eh? A *comic book*? Well, I'll be. I suppose that just goes to show that it's a famous concept, and rightly so; the roles of Maiden, Mother and Crone hold a great deal of spiritual power. Black Furies can tap into a portion of that power through special rites and even Gifts, but one has to recognize one's own aspect first. And that's easy enough.

The spiritual category of Maiden is, well, you, Anxi. A young Fury, not yet a mother. Note that I don't state that virginity is part of the equation — no, the spiritual aspect of the Maiden role has more to do with a woman who's young and...ahem...nubile. A Maiden needn't be a maiden, if that makes any sense. Still, some spirits — I'd almost say Unicorn's brood, but I don't have proof — do respond better to the "pure of body." And there's certainly no shame in virginity. It's an honorable choice, just as valid as responsible sexuality and certainly preferable to irresponsible sexuality. Am I making you uncomfortable? Oh, come now...we're all sisters here, right? Ah well. From your Rite of Passage to motherhood, you're a Maiden, and we'll move on from there.

A Fury becomes a Mother when she becomes a mother, simply enough — the birth of her first child marks the transition. I think the child has to survive, too; I'm not sure, but I think someone who miscarries her first pregnancy is considered to still be a Maiden. At any rate, once a Fury has given birth, she's a Mother, and she takes on that particular role. I see you're in no hurry to reach this phase. Well, you're certainly not alone; many of our young sisters are of the opinion that any children they bear now might not reach maturity before the Apocalypse happens. I suppose I can sympathize with their not wanting to bring children into a world that may be about to end, but I can't help but hope that there's time enough for them to change their minds.

Ahem. Finally, when a Fury passes the age of childbearing, or is simply rendered unable to bear a child — through injury, perhaps...I've seen scars of that kind — she becomes a Crone. No, a Fury doesn't have to look the part, which is fortunate; our blessings of health and vigor help us age well. When a werewolf actually reaches the haggard and toothless stage, it's usually at the end of her life, one way or another. Ah... more about that later. At any rate, this means that you can be a Crone and still in the fit of health; it's a mystical aspect, not a biological condition. If you suffer the wrong sort of wounds, you can jump right from Maiden to Crone, or die before leaving the Maiden role; there's no promise that a Fury will see all three. Yes, Anxi. The metis are considered Crones from the time that they undergo the First Change; never a Maiden, never a Mother.

Males, too? Well, to be honest, we don't even count as Crones. The spiritual power of a Crone requires the lost potential to bear children — a potential that males of any breed never possess. When it comes to these ritual roles, male metis like myself are left out in the cold. It may well be unfair, but I think I've already said enough about that.

The Calyxes

So much for who your sisters are — now I think you should know a thing or two about the Furies that qualify as your mothers or grandmothers. In particular, the leaders of the two Calyxes. Membership in either one is obviously a high honor; perhaps you will one day rise to take your place among our leaders.

The Outer Calyx

Thirteen Furies comprise the Outer Calyx. They are chosen from a much larger pool, and chosen by lot, to represent the influence of the Wyld and Moirai Clotho in the tribe. The Garou of the Outer Calyx come from all over the world when it comes time to choose new members; this happens every three years. If a member of the Calyx dies during the interim, her position is typically taken by her protégé, if she has one. If not, her seat is left vacant until a new Calyx is chosen.

Rank is not a determinant for who may comprise the Outer Calyx — in theory. However, the festivities that precede the moot that decides the Outer Calyx are marked by games that serve to test the would-be leaders, and a great deal of politicking goes on. Of course, regardless of which Garou makes herself look good, the final choices are still made by lot — or so most believe. I can't help but notice, however, that Iona Kinslayer has sat on the Outer Calyx for a number of years now, despite the fact that the members are chosen "randomly." Also, it seems strange that although metis of both genders attempt to join the Calyx, fate never seems to smile upon them.

The Calyx has a function, however, and does perform it well. It is meant to dictate tribal policy the world over. Every Fury on the Calyx watches over a certain region in the world, usually taking a position in a sept in the area (Mistress of the Rite is a favorite). Between them, the members decide what the tribe should focus on, plan gatherings of Furies (rarely) and arbitrate serious disputes. Coming to the attention of the Outer Calyx is often a way to garner Renown, as the 13 of them keep in close contact via spirits and other, more mundane means. Of course, if a misdeed comes to their attention, expect Furies the world over to recognize your name....

The Inner Calyx

The story goes that Artemis granted five powerful Black Furies powerful fetishes, one apiece. She gave them her Cloak (to the Ragabash), her Salve (the Theurge), her Bridle (the Philodox), her Loom (the Galliard) and her Bow (the Ahroun). The five Garou were the first Inner Calyx.

Since then, the membership of the Inner Calyx has remained a mystery. Those of us who pay attention to the tribe as a whole (often by residing at the same sept as a member of the Outer Calyx) often hear rumors that a new Inner Calyx has been chosen, but there isn't any way to know. Artemis herself chooses the members, and her movements have always been mysterious.

What we do know is that there are five Furies in the Inner Calyx, one from each auspice. Each one is supposed to be a sterling example of her auspice — Amethyst mentioned earlier the means by which the Ragabash is chosen, and the other tasks are equally daunting. However, rank has nothing to do with being chosen for the Inner Calyx, and I have heard tales of Garou being chosen after reaching the rank of Fostern.

Different ideological breaks within the tribes are measured by *kuklos*. While members of different *kuklos* might not see eye to eye, they don't fight. We don't need that kind of infighting in our tribe; we've already got enough.

The Amazons of Diana

Unlike many of the other *kuklos*, the Amazons of Diana are rarely seen as a formal group, and in fact many of their members neither think of themselves as being part of a group nor refer to themselves as such. The Amazons of Diana is often a catchall term for those Black Furies who consider their primary role as Garou to be unstoppable warrior-women. These Amazons are less concerned with the Furies' traditional roles as Gaia's avengers than they are with proving their prowess in battle by comparison to males of tribes like the Get of Fenris or the Shadow Lords.

The difference between these Furies and the rest of the tribe is a subtle one; all Furies revere the Wyld, and hate (or at least distrust) the Weaver and the Wyrm. But given a choice between investigating and enacting justice on a batterer or rapist, or fighting gloriously at

Leaders?

Nowhere is the split between young and old Furies more pronounced that in their opinions of the Calyxes. After all, the Inner Calyx in invisible. If the highest leaders of the tribe can't even be bothered to reveal their identities, ask the young Furies, how can the tribe trust that their edicts are in the tribe's best interest? How can the tribe even be sure that this Calyx even exists?

The Outer Calyx is no better. Young Furies are disheartened that we choose our leaders by random chance, especially when it doesn't seem to be completely random. An Adren Fury seems to have a slightly better chance at winning a seat on the Calyx than a Fostern does, and so on up. This apparent hypocrisy is rarely confronted outwardly, but the Cliaths of the tribe continue to grumble...

the teeth of some Wyrm-creature, the Amazons will take the open battle every time. The Amazons of Diana are warriors first, avengers second.

Although many of the more conservative members of the tribe look down on them, Amazons are valiant and forthright, and by far comprise the largest faction among young Black Furies. They are the first to defend the Furies' honor when the tribe is denigrated by outsiders, and are the tribe's vanguard in assaults against Wyrm holdings.

The most vocal and charismatic member of the Amazons of Diana is a thirty-year-old homid named Angela Cries-for-Blood. Unlike many other members of the camp, she knows the value of quietly-established alliances; she works behind the scenes as often as in front of a Moot. She wants to bring the rest of the tribe away from what she sees as a pointless and archaic obsession with punishing lawbreakers, and forward to the 21st Century's fight against the Wyrm and the Apocalypse.

Carlotta cautions: While what Symon says here is true for most the Amazons, I warn you against dismissing them. Many Amazons of Diana behave this way for a time, and then either die or grow up. If they grow up, they are taught that another level to their circle exists, and it is concerned with protection rather than aggression, with prevention rather than retribution. In years past, the *kuklos* wore this face openly; now, as the world goes steadily mad, rationality must take second place to madness. I beseech you, Anxi, do not join these maniacs. There is no honor in blood for blood's sake.

The Bacchantes

Any one of the Bacchantes will tell you that they uphold the oldest, truest traditions of the Black Furies; the Bacchantes are the Vengeance of Gaia. A Bacchante fulfills her destiny by destroying the holdings and livelihoods of the worst violators of Gaia's laws. Not every Fury is cut out to avenge the Mother, the Bacchantes tell you, but those who join the camp are vicious whirlwinds of destruction.

Most outsiders do not distinguish between the Bacchantes and the more numerous Amazons of Diana, and in so doing ignore the greatest rift in the modern Black Fury tribe. The Bacchantes see the Amazons as deluded glory-hounds and third-generation feminists who want to be seen as "women who can kick ass as well as men." They believe the Amazons want nothing more than to throw themselves onto the fangs of the

Wyrm alongside the Get and the Shadow Lords — the Bacchantes know that the war has to be fought closer to the Wyrm's grasp on humanity.

That grasp is best displayed in the worst violators of Gaia's law: rapists, serial murderers, matricides, vast polluters, those performing human cloning experiments, and so on. Rather than waste their energy fighting the most obvious manifestations of the Wyrm's power, the Bacchantes bring a personal, overwhelmingly violent punishment to the criminals they discover. These assaults take place far from the eyes of humanity, and the large-scale ones are most frequently mistaken for natural disasters.

That isn't to say that the Bacchantes don't cooperate with the rest of the tribe when the time is right. When a Nexus Crawler or vampire pack endangers a sept's territory, the Bacchantes stand right beside the Amazons to destroy the menace. It is simply that the Bacchantes would prefer to come down like a hammer from orbit on the planners and perpetrators of Wyrmlike crimes before the danger escalates to such an obvious level.

The Freebooters

The Freebooter camp may not be the smallest camp among the modern Black Furies — that distinction belongs to the Temple of Artemis — but their numbers are shrinking faster than any other camp's. The Freebooters' collective mission is to find new Wyld places that can be consecrated to Gaia and made into Caerns. The camp is shrinking rapidly because there are so damned few Wyld places in the world. For example, did you know that there is nowhere in the United States of America where a human cannot find a road within one day's walk? The Canadian government has turned over a quarter of British Columbia to logging interests, thereby privatizing nearly every hectare of old-growth forest to be found in the province. There is nowhere new left for the Freebooters to explore.

The modern Freebooters show signs of an impending split. A small fraction of the camp, led by a Ragabash Mother named Erin Walks-Through-Darkness, believes that the Freebooters need to find a new body for Gaia elsewhere in the Umbra, in a safe place that the Wyrm has not yet found; her followers are allied with the Wagnerian camp within the Garou Nation at large. Walks-Through-Darkness won't come out and say that she feels that the defense of Gaia, of the physical plane, is a lost cause, but I have it on good authority that she quietly believes this to be true.

Walks-Through-Darkness's group of Freebooters is less than a fifth of the camp, however; the remaining Freebooters dedicate themselves to finding subtly hidden Wyld places in which to build caerns. Barring that, they search for once-holy places that they can re-consecrate to the Mother Goddess. These Freebooters are always on the move; once a new caern has been built (or an old one rebuilt) they are back on the road, searching for another.

Amethyst adds: Also, they steal fetishes. Oh, not from Garou who are using them well! No, they steal tainted ones to destroy or (better yet) cleanse, or unused or dormant ones to take to the Womb.

You don't know where the Womb is? Oh, Anxi....

The Moon-Daughters

The Moon-Daughters camp is one of the fastest-growing groups of Black Furies. The Moon-Daughters' rituals and doctrine echo modern New Age paganism — their beliefs and practices are likely very similar to those of the *strega* who live on the mainland — though the Garou rites have their origins in Gaia and can more directly trace a continuous line into antiquity. However, the Moon-Daughters push themselves to keep Gaia's spirit alive through change; in this, they try to embody the force of the Wyld as best they can. They feel that the hidebound traditionalism of the Temple of Artemis is nothing more than the reach of the Weaver toward the heart of their tribe.

The Moon-Daughters embrace change; they recognize that no institution can stand the test of time, and that establishments created in the dawning days after Gaia's birth may have no place here on the cusp of the Apocalypse. While the Moon-Daughters' rites can trace their roots back thousands of years in time, no ancient Black Fury ancestor-spirit would recognize those rituals in their modern form. The Moon-Daughters effortlessly adapt the trappings of the modern world to fit their magics — inscriptions once traced on rock were sketched with a quill pen in the 1700s and might be drawn on a laptop computer screen today. Admittedly, the Moon-Daughters are no Glass Walkers — their spirituality isn't tied to the Weaver nor wrapped up in technology — but they are unafraid of the modern world. A sister unable to attend a sacred meeting or ritual in person might telecommute or view a website log of the thing.

The Order of Our Merciful Mother

The Order of Our Merciful Mother — or simply the Order, according to many Black Furies — is probably the most often-derided *kuklos* in existence. When the Catholic Church and its splinters and offshoots began to spread throughout Europe in the wake of the Roman Empire, the Order chose not to fight this Patriarchal tool directly, but rather to infiltrate and subvert it. They stepped into supporting roles as best they could, and became nuns when the opportunity presented itself. The "nuns," as other Furies sometimes mockingly call members of this camp, pride themselves on their subtlety in comparison to other Garou.

More Witchas!

"Oh, great," thinks the reader, "more namby-pamby neo-witches in the World of Darkness. Haven't we got enough of those?" The philosophies of the Moon-Daughters, however, are hardly all tranquility and love, nor do they really conform to modern-day Wicca's beliefs.

The Moon-Daughters' involvement with Wiccan circles in their communities helps them keep an eye out for any lost cubs that might grow up near their septs, and the Daughters frequently adapt their rites in response to useful insights gleaned from discussion with pagans in such groups. Since certain human sorcerers and agents of the Wyrm sometimes keep a finger on these groups, the Moon-Daughters occasionally learn of such beings' machinations long before other Garou do. However, in dealing with Wiccan and other neo-pagan groups, the Furies try to teach them two important lessons.

First, while faith might be eternal, religion must evolve. Change is necessary for growth; many Wiccans deride Catholicism for its stagnation over the years, but neglect to learn the roots of their own religion, many of which are quite recent. The Moon-Daughters try to teach that every woman is a vessel for the Goddess, no matter what "level" in a "coven" she has reached.

Second, while the Furies understand the idea behind the three-fold law (that everything one does comes back threefold), they caution those who listen against trusting in it. The world is often random, and believing it to be loving and fair is just as false as believing it to be cruel. Certainly people and even spirits can be malevolent or kind, but the world (and therefore Gaia, or the Goddess, or whatever one wishes to call it) simply is. Guessing at Her motives leads only to pain when, as inevitably happens, bad things befall good people. The Moon-Daughters believe that it is more important to prepare for the worst and keep the best in one's heart than it is to assume the best and shut out thoughts of the worst.

And, although they don't teach their human allies of it, the Moon-Daughters understand the chaotic, violent, brutal truth of the natural world, and are capable of becoming part of that chaos at a moment's notice. Needless to say, the old adage of "An ye harm none, do what ye will" doesn't always resonate with them....

The Order is somewhat loosely organized, as each Fury pack tends to the Gaian needs of its immediate community without regard to the tribe's larger plans. In times of great need — there have been only a few in the last century — the Order convenes in a great Council at an isolated caern in northern Italy and agrees on a common plan of action. The last Great Council of the Order was called during the Second World War; its leader, Madre Teresa Escondido of Colombia, died during a ritual just a few years ago. Reports have already arisen that Escondido resides among the honored ancestor spirits, and dotes on no few of her descendants among the Furies.

The Order of the Merciful Mother works to reform human society using that society's tools — politics, the arts and popular culture, and most especially religion. Garou of the Order of the Merciful Mother sometimes join a religious order as they join the Order (when the Curse doesn't interfere too badly), and most genuinely agree with the stated mission of the religious group they join. This can be the cause of some internal conflict for the Garou, who takes a solemn oath to serve God and the Church (or the group they join — Furies of the Order of the Merciful Mother do not merely join Catholic groups) and also has to uphold her primary responsibility to Gaia.

Carlotta offers an opinion: What Symon says about the derision this camp faces is true. During my years with the Vatican, I was actually challenged to combat to the death by no fewer than three Furies who felt that I was contributing to the suffering and oppression of women everywhere. What many Furies forget is that women in religious orders are there by choice. If they have made that choice because of guilt, shame, or faith, so be it. It is not for us to judge our sisters. Also, despite the Catholic-sounding name of the camp, the Order finds its members in religions the world over. For example, Jesal Voice-of-the-Sands, an elder (and member of the Outer Calyx, if memory serves) is a devout Muslim as well as the ritemistress for a caern in Egypt. She receives her share of abuse for wearing the veil, but bears it all with more stoicism than I ever could.

Why did I leave the Order? My sister, what makes you think I left? I was never a cloistered nun, merely a historian. Joining a religious order isn't necessary for being a member of the Order of the Merciful Mother. Merely being associated with the religion is enough.

Christianity in the World of Darkness

In stark contrast to the real world, in the World of Darkness, conservative religious bodies have higher memberships and wield far greater power. The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, has a far larger membership in the World of Darkness than it does in the real world; this may be due to the influence of the Weaver and its works, or the machinations of vampires and similar beings.

This is not to say that Protestant denominations are empty of members, of course, but in the World of Darkness the sorts of moderate, amiable Protestant churches found throughout America are far rarer, instead outnumbered by extremely conservative "fire-and-brimstone" sorts of congregations. Indeed, in small towns and rural communities, lynch mob justice and "God's judgment" might well force a Fury to take violent action....

The Sisterhood

The Black Furies of the Sisterhood are never bored or lonely. These Garou manage networks of contacts and information that might rival those of the Bone Gnawers or Glass Walkers. When another Fury needs a tidbit of information — a corporate executive's address, the location of the nearest Kinfolk physician, or the name of a good club to relax at — she contacts a Sister. The Sisters earn a lot of favors through this kind of information peddling, but they don't dangle such debts over their tribemates' heads. Many cheerfully admit to being natural information networkers anyway — they just tend to collect minutiae and trivia about people and places over the course of an average day — and if this information proves useful in the fight against the Wyrm, hey, at least it's good for something.

Many Ragabash Sisters also work as procurers. Nearly any of them can get easy things (fireworks in upstate New York on the 3rd of July); some can get difficult things (a security key for a high-tech corporation's headquarters); crones can get impossible things (a liter of giant's blood). They aren't thieves, mind you; they just seem to know where to find things.

The Sisterhood came about during the Inquisition; Furies who came to form this camp spent their years spiriting Garou, Kinfolk, and wise women out of the path of the Church and from there to safety. As they learned byways, roads, and Moon Bridges around most of Europe, they discovered that the information they brought with them was at least as valuable to allied septs as another set of claws and teeth. The centuries refined the Sisterhood's role to that which we see today; they do less traveling now, but they still perform the activity that brought their ancestors together.

The Furies of the Order of the Merciful Mother and those of the Sisterhood do not get along particularly well. The Sisterhood sees the Furies of the Order as having been co-opted by the Church centuries ago, when the Sisterhood was trying to fight the Church — or at least get out of its way. Few Sisters believe that the nuns could have spent as long as they have in the Patriarch's embrace without having been at least slightly tainted.

Carlotta disagrees: I have worked alongside Sisters, both Kinfolk and Garou, and even when they knew of my affiliations, they judged me on my actions and not my beliefs. Symon, perhaps your experience differs from mine, but don't give the child — young sister, pardon me — the idea that *kuklos* are at war!

The Temple of Artemis

No cubs are permitted to enter the ranks of the Temple of Artemis, and perhaps one Fostern in a hundred meets the Temple's strict requirements for entry. The Temple of Artemis is by far the most conservative camp of the Black Furies; they are firm allies of the Bacchantes camp, serving as the wisdom to that group's rage.

The Temple of Artemis urges all Black Furies to pull away from the other tribes, as those Garou ignore the race's imperative to strike down criminals against Gaia's law in favor of a quixotic hundred-front war they cannot hope to win. The Crones of the Temple know that their tribemates must strike at the Wyrm, but not in a disordered frenzy, as they do now. The Furies must work as a cohesive whole, and allow each of the other tribes to work on its own, as well; cross-tribe packs are a travesty and may even violate Gaia's laws. Certainly they violate Gaia's apparent intentions in separating the Garou Nation up into thirteen (all right, sixteen) tribes in the first days.

The Temple of Artemis influences the Outer Calyx to a degree out of proportion to its size. This is primarily due to demographics; the Outer Calyx chooses its membership from the eldest and most experienced Furies, and the Temple of Artemis has more Crones in it than any other camp does. Furies drift into the Temple of Artemis camp as they get older and see the impotence of young Furies' rage in the face of the Wyrm's might. Accordingly, those selected from the Temple of Artemis into the Outer Calyx have fairly a fairly cynical and conservative attitude toward the value of frontal assault against the Wyrm's forces.

Members of the Temple of Artemis have been known to stand in judgment of Fury lawbreakers without the knowledge or consent of either Calyx or the elders of the accused Furies' home sept. This sort of thing happens most often when Fury lawbreakers reside in a multi-tribal caern and Crones of the Temple do not feel that the lawbreakers will meet with appropriate justice at that sept's leaders' hands.

The Temple of Artemis holds the Moon-Daughter camp in particular contempt; the Crones find the younger sisters and little daughters of this group cloying and too inclined to see their ideas as revolutionary, when in fact they are merely rehashing of thrice-digested Gaian wisdom blended with a little human New Agery. The Moon-Daughters obviously have honest faith in their belief system, and the most patient of the Crones of the Temple just wait for the Daughters to outgrow this phase and join the rest of the tribe.

The Litany

I'm quite sure you've heard it all. Stay awake and listen again. This is important stuff, you know.

Why? Well, consider this. You've no doubt heard unpleasant things about all of the other tribes, and probably some good things as well. But you know all the tribes have their own take on the world and how it should run. So, when you think about the Litany, remember that all of the tribes agreed on these tenets quite a lot of years ago. Changing the Litany requires a unanimous decision on the part of the Garou Nation. Think that'll ever happen again?

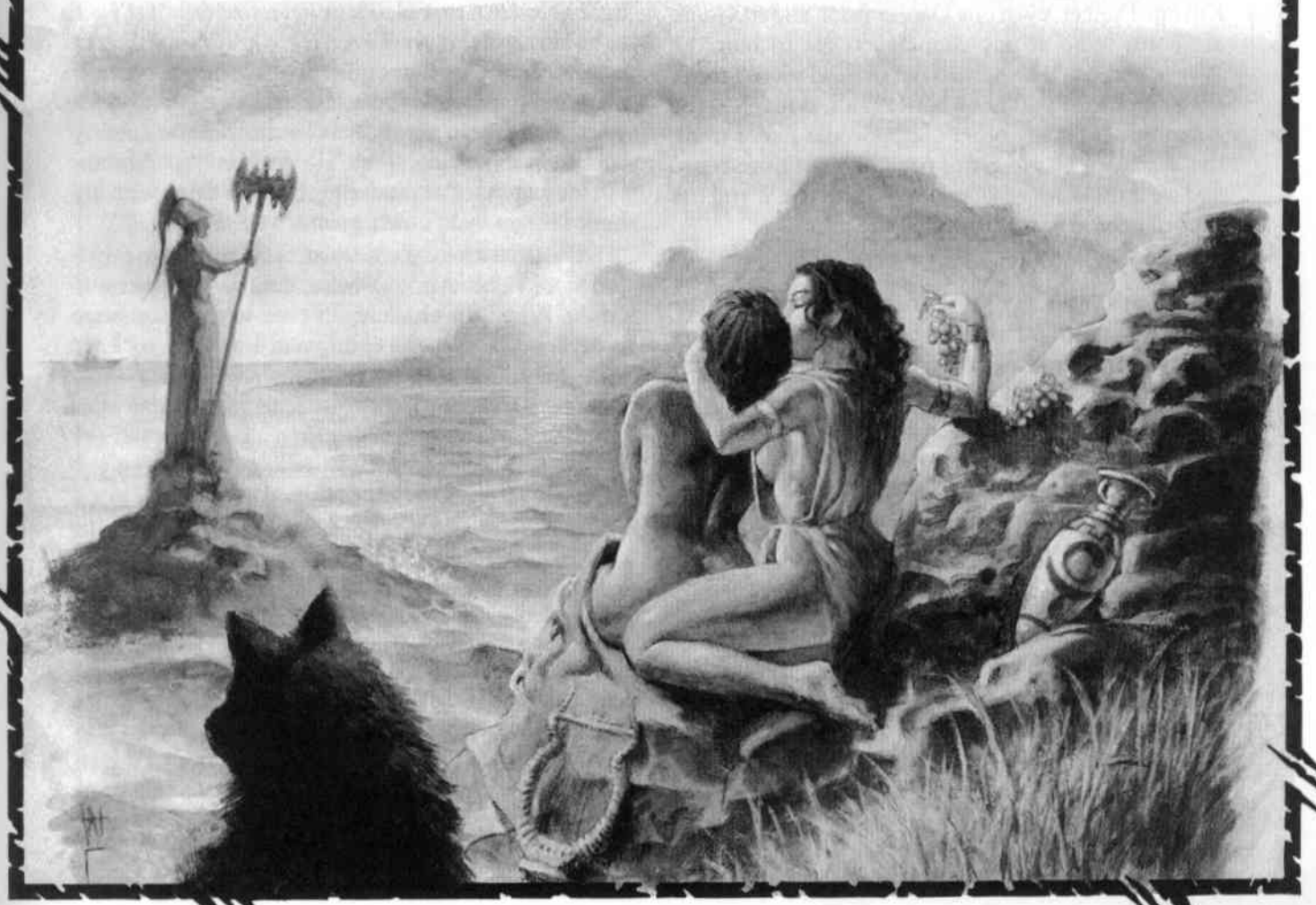
Garou Shall Not Mate with Garou

Now, why is this the first law of the Litany, hmm? Must be pretty important. I think that it was put first so that by the time you got to the last one, you'd forget about it. No, I'm not serious. But it's hard to look a metis in the face and say "it would be better if you had never been born, you walking breach of Gaia's law." That kind of cruelty doesn't really help anyone, does it?

The Furies don't exactly go easy on us metis, as I've said, but they're better about it than some tribes. Others tend to shun metis completely or use them as cannon fodder, and even among the Furies, we work twice as hard. I understand it. I really do. We really are children conceived in sin, and while we can't be faulted for our parents' mistake (and they *are* punished), we are asked to make up for it.

All that said, if you really feel you can't control the urge to mate with another werewolf, go confess your impure thoughts to a sept elder. By the time your ears stop ringing, odds are you won't find him so attractive anymore anyway.

Carlotta adds: Note that there's a big difference between "breeding" and "having sex." The Children of Gaia feel this way, I believe: Sex with other werewolves is all right, so long as pregnancy doesn't result. Now, the problem is that for whatever reason, be it our unique physiology or a curse from Gaia, we tend to conceive easily during such matings. There's a really obvious solution, of course, and it happens fairly fre-



quently among the Furies. Of course, taking pleasure with another woman isn't for everyone.

Combat the Wyrm Wherever It Dwells and Wherever It Breeds

The Law actually states that "the Wyrm is the source of all evil in the world." What a load of shit. That's just so convenient, isn't it: point the blame for all of our problems at this one adversary and then anytime something goes wrong, we can all yell "Wyrm!" Frees us up from little things like responsibility.

The Wyrm is *not* responsible for all the evils of the world. Rape, murder, and so forth happen, and I'm willing to bet they'd happen without the Wyrm's influence. So, first of all, free your mind from that part of the law.

Now, that said, it's still vital to fight the Wyrm, because the Wyrm just makes things worse. If we could get the Wyrm to knock off trying to corrupt and destroy everything, there would still be a lot of work to do — but we could do it without having a near-omnipotent entity working against us! So when the Wyrm presents and obvious target, take your shot. The Black Spiral Dancer you tear to pieces today won't be around to rape your Kinfolk tomorrow. The Bane-tainted food you burn won't ever poison anyone.

Amethyst cautions: The problem is, all we do by fighting Wyrm-things is delay. We don't really help. Kill one Dancer, even one Dancer pack, and still more are born. Jump at any chance you get to hurt the Wyrm, and you'll be burned out or dead soon. I think the Final Battle won't be a battle at all, as much as the Amazons and many other Garou would like. I think the Wyrm's going to get us to fight some huge beast, and we'll think we've won, only to find the Wyrm has slipped behind us and captured the prize.

Respect the Territory of Another

I don't leave my sept much, other than in the Umbra. My opinion has always been that announcing one's presence and intentions when entering another's territory is polite and proper behavior.

Carlotta answers: Yes, it is. But I'll add a bit more to that. A predator sees any encroachment on her territory as a threat. If the intruder nears her den, expect her to become very violent. Thus, bear this tenet of the Litany heavily in mind if you ever have occasion to visit a caern held by the Red Talons, as they will attack intruders without questions.

In urban caerns and septs, announcing howls are impractical at least. But then, it is nearly impossible for a Warder to guard more than the actual heart of the caern in a city. If you visit an urban caern and have the means, call ahead to the Warder or sept leader and announce yourself that way. As Symon says, it's just polite; you wouldn't want uninvited guests dropping over all the time, would you?

Amethyst laments: This Law is often overlooked. Europeans stole from Pure Ones, we all stole from other Fera. If we had paid attention to this Law, maybe there would still be Bunyip and Croatan. But we didn't, we went to their homes without announcing, and got angry when they fought.

If you enter another's territory and announce yourself, that doesn't mean you can stay. The one who lives there can still tell you to leave, and you should respect her wishes. While all Garou should help each other, you cannot presume to know what is happening in a strange sept. Be careful when traveling.

Accept an Honorable Surrender

Look, we've all got anger control problems. It's part of who we are. And that means that someday, some Garou, either Fury or otherwise, is going to piss you off and you're going to throw down the gauntlet. When that happens, Gaia runs the risk of losing two champions.

Fighting another werewolf is just stupid. If anybody ever challenges you, remember that you usually have the right to invoke a challenge of gamecraft, or endurance (like a race), or something other than straight combat. Even if it has to be a fight, you could try to get the Master of the Challenge to rule that the fight goes until first blood, or even first fall. If it's got to be fang and claw, however, try to know when you're beaten. If you're hurt, quit. If it's a life-and-death matter of honor, ask yourself whose. I've got news for you: I've never, *never*, heard of a dead Garou coming back to us and saying, "I'm really glad I let that Ahroun kill me instead of surrendering, because dying with my honor intact makes me a greater force for Gaia."

Die to be a hero if you want, but don't die to prove you were right. And, likewise, don't kill to prove it either. When the challenge is over, when the winner is declared, accept the ruling and live with it. That means not holding a grudge if you're beaten and not gloating if you win. This is one tenet of the Litany I'm in full agreement with.

Carlotta reasons: All well and good, if you're fighting someone you trust not to tear your throat out if you expose it. The problem is, you never know who's going to go berserk in a fight and see you as a moving shape to be torn in two instead of a Garou. Challenges are serious business — never initiate one without good cause.

Submission to Those of Higher Station

This one is dangerous. "Higher station" is sometimes used synonymously with "man," and you can guess how well that goes over with the Black Furies. I'd love to be able to say that Furies understand that someone of

higher rank isn't necessarily of higher rank because of gender, but that just isn't so. A lot of younger Black Furies (the Amazons of Diana in particular) try to make it a point to heckle males of any tribe, regardless of rank, and that gets them into trouble.

"Submission" is the other problem. Furies don't like the word or the concept. Following a good leader is fine. Obeying orders in battle is good. But submitting to an alpha's will sticks in the throats of most Furies, especially if that alpha happens to be male.

In recent times, this Law has become less important as Cliaths have gotten more independent and wonder about the wisdom of sticking to the old ways when the old ways don't seem to be getting them anywhere. That's especially true in our tribe, as the divide between young and old Furies grows wider. I once heard one Cliath ask, "What's the elder going to do? Come down from the Calyx and kick my ass?" Crude, but valid, I'm afraid.

Carlotta adds: Symon fails to mention that alphas fall back on whatever laurels they can to keep control. Sometimes that means reciting the deeds of their ancestors, sometimes it means rallying others around them, but sometimes they try to do it by force. If ever a Garou tries to dominate one of your sisters, no matter what her tribe, help her. Do not look away. I hardly need to explain what that will lead to.

The First Share of the Kill for the Greatest in Station

"Greatest in station" usually means "highest in rank." The tenet means that the alphas eat first, leaving cubs and metis the scraps. This works all right for normal wolves, but for Garou, it tends to chafe somewhat.

Like the previous tenet, this Law commonly devolves into a pissing contest between men, and is disregarded among women. When a pack of Garou led by a Black Fury makes a kill, be it in a hunt or in battle, she usually tries to give credit where it's due. If that means letting a younger pack member have a fetish or some other "spoil" that she'd rather have, that's the way it goes. I don't want to suggest that all Furies are this mature and egalitarian, but the greed and haughtiness that drive other Garou to keep all the best stuff just because they can isn't very common in our tribe.

Amethyst relates a story: I heard about a pack that included a Freebooter. Her alpha, a proud and rather pompous Glass Walker Ahroun, enforced this tenet pretty severely. After a battle in which they destroyed a powerful Leech, the pack discovered a long-lost fetish in the vampire's home. The Glass Walker immediately seized it, claiming that the glyphs on it marked it as belonging to his tribe anyway. And that was true; the Glass Walker glyph was indeed etched on the side of the odd statuette. The Black Fury objected, but he shouted her down.

Three months later, the pack had to hunt down and slay its own alpha for the crime of eating human flesh. It seems that the "fetish" he had found was in the vampire's collection for a reason; another Glass Walker had planted it there to act as a deterrent to the Leech's bloodsucking. It had a... strange effect on the Garou who attuned himself to it. The Fury could have warned him, had he let her.

Ye Shall Not Eat the Flesh of Humans

Amethyst's story leads us directly into the next Law. We all know why it isn't good to eat humans; for one thing, their flesh is fouled by the chemicals they eat, and for another, we're meant to protect and avenge them, not prey upon them. The Impergium already did irreparable damage to the human psyche; we have no reason to inflict more. If it becomes necessary to kill humans, do so, but remember that you are what you eat.

From the face you're making, I can assume you find the notion of cannibalism to be truly repulsive. That's good. Here's a word of warning, though, Anxi. You were born human, which means if you descend too deeply into rage, you may find yourself breaking this tenet regardless of your intentions. That might give you some clemency if you're found out... but then again, maybe not. Also, I'm told that human flesh is addictive. Those who start out preying on humans by accident sometimes end up seeking out situations where they know everything will end in violence, reasoning that what they do in frenzy isn't their fault. I've heard tell of Amazons of Diana put down in shame by their own sisters for getting a little too deeply into their work.

Respect Those Beneath Ye — All Are of Gaia

Yet another dominance Law, if a little more subtle than those before it. This can be interpreted as a kind of "Do unto others" sort of tenet — everything on Earth is of Gaia, after all, and while life feeds upon life, we must recognize that in the end we become food as well. Lupus don't often need this tenet explained for them, as it comes naturally; they know that the prey exist to be eaten, and the lupus respect their sacrifice.

Of course, some Garou see this as a kind of *noblesse oblige*, a reminder to be kind and sympathetic to their lessers. These are ones you'll see nodding blandly when young Garou speak up about the dangers of the Weaver as well as (or instead of) the Wyrm. And as much as I'd like to say that Furies follow the first interpretation, the fact is we've got plenty of both in our tribe.

The Veil Shall Not Be Lifted

When people see our war-form, they go insane for a short time. Sometimes, that "short time" is the rest of the unfortunate person's life. Sometimes the person has nightmares for years. Sometimes the person remembers everything, and then we have to worry about a hunter stalking us, or a reporter snooping around a sept.

Do *not* use the Delirium as cover. While the vast majority of people will forget what they saw or have delusions about wild dogs or bears, the one person who remembers might be enough to cause you problems later. Likewise, police carry firearms in most nations, and when faced with a raging Crinos, they might start firing indiscriminately. Find other ways to hide your action. If Rage is called for, then leave no one alive. That may seem harsh, but living by that rule will certainly make you less likely to change shape without need.

Also remember that the war-form is the only one that incites the Delirium. You might change from your wolf skin directly to your natural form, Anxi, and no one looking on will forget or lose her mind.

Hiding from humanity dismays some of the haughtier Furies, who enjoy seeing grown men wet themselves and flee in terror. The problem is that humans are resilient and tenacious, especially in fear or hatred. If they knew we existed, they would feel threatened, and they would come for us with silver and fire. Discretion, little sister.

Do Not Suffer Thy People to Tend Thy Sickness

Old age usually isn't a problem for Garou. We die in glorious battle and resign our souls to Gaia much more often than we die of natural causes. But this tent doesn't just apply to death by old age. A Fury of any age may be wounded beyond hope, or poisoned by Balefire or some other such Wyrm-toxin. When this happens, the healers of our tribe do everything they can to save their sister's life. Quests into the Umbra to find mystical herbs or to entreat spirits are not uncommon.

Sometimes, however, we must let go. It's hard to face, but when there's nothing more to be done, the Furies try to accept their fates and move on to the next life. Better to die in peace than live in agony, I've always said. When the time comes for me to die, assuming, of course, that I do not die in battle, I shall walk into the sea and let the waves take me on my last journey.

The Leader May Be Challenged at Any Time During Peace

Clever law, this. It requires peace, after all. And in the last days, when are we ever at peace?

The leaders of the Black Furies — the Inner Calyx — have another way around this Law. No one knows who or where they are! They can't be challenged if no one can find them. But there shouldn't be any need to challenge them, as they are chosen by Artemis herself, right?

I'm not saying that the system is corrupt, only that it could be. Of all the tenets of the Litany, this is the one that angers the younger Furies the most, because it puts the possibility of change in front of them, and then yanks it away.

The Leader May Not Be Challenged During Wartime

What this is supposed to mean, I think, is that during a battle, the alpha's word is law. You can't ask "Why?" when the alpha yells a battle tactic at you, you just have to go along with it. Disobeying the orders of an alpha in battle will cost you Renown at the least, and quite possibly your life. Even the Ragabash, questioners that they are, know better than to pause during combat to poke holes in the alpha's strategy.

Ye Shall Take No Action That Causes a Caern to Be Violated

There's really very little to say here. This tenet of the Litany isn't open for discussion or re-interpretation, and since you live at one of the most unique and powerful caerns remaining, I don't think it's necessary to explain it.

I will say, however, that if a caern Warder seems harsh or if the rules seem strict, this tenet is why. Better a little inconvenience for you than a lost caern.

The Face of the Mother

The four Garou stand up from the rocks just as they begin to melt away into mist. Anxi wonders where they will end next, what more she can learn. Carlotta reaches forward and the mists opens for her, as though she were drawing back a curtain. The four werewolves step through the opening into what looks like a library.

"This is where I do much of my work, sister," says Carlotta, perhaps with a touch of pride in her voice. From here one can learn nearly anything about the world in which we live. The only thing better is taking a tour — you get something in between."

Carlotta opens a huge atlas and points to Greece. "Shall we begin in your homeland?"

Europe

Such a small place, yet so many differing cultures! Any biologist will tell you that you may measure how well an area thrives by the diversity of life it supports. Europe has much to offer the Furies, both in the way of allies and enemies.

You may be aware that caerns in Europe are much more likely to house only one tribe than in other lands.

Laws of the Black Furies

Carlotta adds to the Litany:

Symon has explained the Litany and how it relates to us fairly well, but let me add a few "laws" that the Furies abide as nearly as important.

- **Suffer no Abuse to Woman:** Women are, on average, not as *physically* strong as men. This means that they sometimes need protection. I hardly need to tell you who should provide it.
- **Remember Your Parents:** Unless I missed a major theological event, there haven't been any immaculate conceptions recently. That means you were born of a man and a woman. No matter your personal feelings on men, they are and always have been one half of the equation. A man is not evil simply by dint of his sex; to believe so is no better than calling women "the weaker sex."
- **Train the Weak; Protect the Helpless:** You do remember the difference, don't you? Weak people produce more weak people, and since humans have virtually no method of natural selection, it is up to us to try to correct their weaknesses as best we can.
- **Keep the Wyld Places Pure:** This has both symbolic and literal meaning. Some Furies take this to mean "protect your sexuality": That is, don't give it away cheaply. Others believe it to be a simply reminder to guard caerns and other such holy places. I think it means both, and more besides; women carry many secrets and our connection to the Mother is something a man might guess at, but never feel. I believe this tenet is reminder to revel in what it is to be a woman.

That means that most of our sisters here live in Greece, although the occasional Fury can be found in other parts of the continent. Wherever we are needed, we go — granted that we can earn permission, of course. That tends to mean that we are rare in the Germanic and Scandinavian homelands of the Get of Fenris — for obvious reasons.

Greece

Our beloved tribal homeland. What few of our lupine Kinfolk remain live here. The *strega* — our capable human Kinfolk — reside here as well, carrying word for us or offering hospitality or a place to rest. The island that houses your sept, in fact, is legally owned by a group of *strega* who live on the mainland, but I'm sure you knew that. Although our numbers have decreased, you can always find sisters here in the Greek isles. If the legends are true, the Inner Calyx resides on one of the many islands in the Aegean Sea, watching over a powerful but well-hidden caern — not too far from the sept that's playing host to you, I would imagine. Of course, one hears a lot of legends about the Inner Calyx.

Septs in Greece hold moots open to all Black Furies occasionally. If you have the chance — and you probably will, given that you're native to these isles — I suggest you go. First, it will let you revel in the rites of the Furies, hear their songs, dance and howl with your sisters, and truly be a daughter of the Wyld. Second, it will give you insight into the Bacchantes, because although not all of us belong to that particular circle, all of us do carry their Rage. Not all of our rites are clean and joyous; a good number are bloody. Some smaller villages in Greece still hang their windowsills with special herbs to keep the wolves away, and lock their doors tight when they hear our cries. Sometimes, like Actaeon, a young man gets brave and follows the noises. Like that unfortunate hunter, he is taught a brief and quite brutal lesson in minding his own business.

The Balkans

There is something here, some horrible Wyrm-minion that drives the people of these lands to the horrible measures they take. They seem to want freedom, but the rape camps and other such atrocities that have sprung up are no course to freedom. Something is urging the citizens towards these evils, for I cannot believe that they did this themselves.

And yet, I am forced to face the possibility that the only cause for the suffering in the Balkans is human folly. The Black Furies and the Shadow Lords have actually worked together to find the source, but no source presents itself. It would be easier on all of us if some Wyrm-spirit, no matter how powerful, would show itself and claim responsibility. How long can the world last if humans do the Wyrm's work for it, and with such enthusiasm?

Asia

The only Garou native to the Far East, to my knowledge, are the Stargazers. I never had the chance to speak with one of these Garou, and now perhaps I never will. I consider it a shame, for I know little of what transpires in Asia. I hear stories of female children drowned at birth, and of horrible slave-trade rings — but nothing from Furies who live there.

Amethyst adds: I have heard that other Fera in Asia may join with packs of Garou, and that they respect the Garou, rather than fear or hate them. This must be truly strange, to join a pack with a lizard or a fox!

The Middle East

I see by your expression that you have not heard good things about the Middle East. I have never

ventured here, and all I can tell you is that reading the Quran paints a very different picture of Islam than what is actually practiced.

The Quran, for example, states that women must wear veils so that they will not be molested and may maintain their dignity. The idea is for men to talk with them rather than ogle them. Can't say I disagree with the spirit, but the problem is that it has the effect of making women look the same, and I can't help feeling that might make us interchangeable for some men. Also, it isn't just the veil that causes us problems. Female circumcision, while not an official Islamic practice, does happen. There are certain circumstances where it is legal for a father to murder his daughter.

If you venture there, be prepared to hold your Rage in check. The Leeches are strong in the Middle East, in Egypt especially, and we have precious few safe havens.

Africa

Another land which has seen more than its share of bloodshed in recent years. Massacres create or fatten Banes, which move on to infect others, which only worsens the situation. The only bit of hope I can offer here is the Ahadi. News have come to us via the Silent Striders of an alliance of sorts — many of the Fera in Africa have agreed to help, rather than fight, each other. I cannot say what the particulars of this agreement are; all I know is that the parties involved seem committed to supporting one another for more than a time-sensitive task or two. Time will tell how well this agreement will work, but I hardly need to say that the Furies who know of it support it completely.

I know, it's more a gesture than a proper oath of allegiance. After all, we're not strong in Africa — there are no wolves there! The Bone Gnawers and Silent Striders may have found ways to breed with the local canids, but they keep those secrets; and truth be told, I have no desire to learn the secret of breeding with jackals for myself.

South America

Some silly young homids of other tribes buy into the persistent urban legend that a "lost tribe" of Furies lives on in the depths of the rainforest. I'm sure that in the imaginations of those who perpetuate the myth, these wild women wear jaguar-skin bikinis, have lovely blonde hair, and regularly shave their legs.

What *is* true is that the Amazon rainforest is no closer to being saved than it was ten years ago — in fact, it's lost more and more ground. The idiot humans continue to think that if they could just clear away the trees, they'd have wonderful land for agriculture, never once realizing that it's the forest itself that preserves the land. And so the war in the Amazon rages on, and each year more Garou die. The war chief is one of the Fenrir, which causes the Amazons of Diana no end of consternation. I have heard, however, that the chieftain's usual response to a challenge is to say, "Tell me why you think you could do better." Since few young upstarts ever have good answers for him, he considers that the end of the challenge.

One of the more important warriors in the Amazon is Electra Shieldmaiden, a Galliard who wishes to preserve the tales of the war. While I applaud her noble efforts and the success that she's had interacting with the native peoples, if we don't win the war, it won't matter how well the stories are preserved.

North America

Apart from my home in Italy, this is where I've spent most of my time. I schooled in America, and it still amazes me the remarkable freedom that the citizens have, and how they choose to squander it.

Women suffer here, true, and the suffering is not sanctioned by the law the way it is in other lands. A woman who is raped may take legal action against her assailant — but so many do not. So many believe the courts will do nothing — and if their attackers are rich and privileged enough, that is sadly true. Date rape is a fact of life at college campuses, and the heads of fraternities, coaches, so-called educators — they all turn a blind eye, afraid to offend the alumni. A wife who is beaten may leave her husband — but often, she stays, believing he will somehow change. It is a beautiful optimistic belief, and sometimes true, that a person — a man — is capable of change, but how many beatings does it take for the improbability of it all to sink in?

And this isn't the worst thing about the country, either. Celebrities and advertisements show thin and unhealthy-looking women being adored and generally enjoying life. So, young girls are made to feel abnormal and loathe their bodies. The Church decries sexuality for any reason but procreation — and women learn to fear their sexual power. And we can't exactly storm the offices of the advertising companies howling the Anthem of War. The changes necessary must almost be made one woman at a time, and we don't have the years left to do it.

Australia

The Furies may have allied with Shadow Lords in Europe, but Australia is another matter. Barely more than a score of Furies live here, most of them in the Kangaroo Island Protectorate. Beyond that, you might find a Fury or two in other lands and in other septs. However, the specter of the murdered Bunyip hangs over the Umbra of Australia, and the Furies participated in their slaughter along with all the other tribes (save for the Children of Gaia, so they say). Time may

dull the memory, but we still have blood on our claws. Remember that, should you ever travel to Australia.

The Umbra

Amethyst speaks of the Umbra: Carlotta lets me talk about the spirit-world, which is fitting since I'm not only a lupus but a Theurge as well. Maybe the elders at your sept have talked about the Umbral Realms to you? Good, then I just have to touch on some important places.

First of all, any Realm that's still Wyld and pure is important to us. Pangaea lets us lay down tribal difficulties for a time, while still running free and wild. The Heart of the Wyld, sometimes called Flux Realm, is common place for Furies to quest. Some homid Furies need to understand the beauty of the Wyld — and then some Bacchantes who have descended too far into revelry need to be tossed into the chaos and forced to swim against it. It's harsh, but good exercise.

The Fury home-realm is... home. There's really not another way to describe it. Even if we've never seen Greece, the Furies feel like they're in the right place upon entering the realm. If you're really lucky, you'll get invited to a moot in the home-realm, although I warn you, they can get pretty wild... and bloody. While Carlotta mentioned the Inner Calyx is rumored to meet on one of the Greek Islands in the Realm, I think it's just as likely that they meet in our tribal homelands.

Finally, there's one more Realm we visit fairly often: Atrocity. I've been there, sister, and let me tell you that if you think things are bad on Earth... you're right. Every crime of man against woman is right there to view, so if you ever need proof-positive that you need to take action against a particular man, it's probably there somewhere. Just remember that everything you see in Atrocity *already happened.* If you trying to view it as though it's happening now, you'll go mad. I saw a Fury run from emanation to emanation, trying to end the horror. We finally lost track of her — she's either still there or she's wandering the Umbra somewhere.

The Tribes

The other twelve tribes — eleven, actually, within the Garou Nation — have their own particular quirks and foibles. Now, it runs in my mind that I had... here we are.

This transcript is simply the opinions of two Furies, recording their experiences and insights regarding the other tribes. Read it, but remember that the Black Furies rarely speak as one. This holds true from the most trivial opinions (which local bands are the best?) to the most important (which of the Triat is the greatest foe?).

Accordingly, when it comes to the Furies' opinions of other tribes, I decided it would be more realistic to present two opinions. The first is that of Cara, a young Fury and Amazon of Diana. The second is Konstantina, an older Fury, and member of the Temple of Artemis. Neither of these precisely speaks for the "average" Black Fury, of course, but you may be able to triangulate a tribal median of opinion. Neither Cara nor Konstantina are infallible, of course, and the three of us may interject at times to offer our own thoughts.

Bone Gnawers

Cara: They dwell in the city and work with Glass Walkers, Ratkin, and Weaver-spirits. I don't trust them. And they are horndogs, Gaia's breath, it's like they've never smelled a clean woman before. What part of "Garou shall not mate with Garou" don't these pigs understand, anyway? Avoid them if you can.

Konstantina: Don't let their foul behavior and mannerisms fool you. These bumpkins and slum-dwellers have contacts all over the city. I avoid them when possible, but when I am left with no other choice and need information in the city, I go to them. Of course, that information does not come cheaply.

Symon interjects: Cara seems to feel that the Bone Gnawers and the Ratkin are bosom companions. Other than the fact that they both worship the same totem, I have no reason to believe that the two groups have any real contact, any more than the rare pack that follows Panther is sought out by the Bastet.

Children of Gaia

Cara: Generally I would heap scorn on these guys — we are a *warrior race*, didn't anyone tell the Children? But then I heard that a sister in my sept had a male baby that went through his First Change just recently and the Children of Gaia adopted him without a second thought, with no mention of a debt owed or child support. I'm starting to think that the Children might be more necessary to the war than I had believed...

Konstantina: They are our steadfast allies, and stronger in a fight than most realize. They might turn the other cheek again and again, but when they do finally put up a hand to stop an incoming blow, their resolve is nearly unmatched. Their enemies quickly come to regret that.

Fianna

Cara: Oh, Gaia, more horndogs. Drunks, too. They're like Bone Gnawers with clean clothes and non-squatter housing. I suppose they're okay in a fight, but the "och and begorrah" bullshit some of them use to pick up impressionable American girls simply has to go.

Konstantina: The Fianna are fierce and passionate; their zest for life makes them valuable allies in the war against the Great Unmaker. Some of them can get a little corny at times, I admit, but I'd rather have them with us than against us.

Amethyst's thoughts: I have a Fianna packmate. Once, we needed to find out a secret from a human who worked for a company called "Avalon," and he met the man at a bar and drank with him until he told my packmate the secret. He never used a Gift for fear of attracting Banes — we had seen many in the area. The Fianna have skills that we should respect.

Get of Fenris

Cara: One of my packsisters was "born" into the Get of Fenris in upstate Minnesota. A more serious bunch of assholes was never born. She could hold her own with any of them, throughout her childhood, and after her First Change she could handle any scrap with the male cubs, but she never got a lick of respect. And the females of the sept gave her shit for insisting that she was getting a raw deal. As though she had to take ten years of abuse before she was allowed to speak up. She's much better off now that she's joined us, and a few Get of Fenris have the battle scars as evidence.

Konstantina: They are reprehensible dogs. Their behavior during and after the Second World War was positively villainous; they used the cover of war to seize caerns from Garou who were too busy fighting the Wyrmlings of the Fenrir homeland to defend their holy sites. There may be honorable Get of Fenris lurking in the corners of the world, but in my life I have encountered only a handful.

Carlotta adds: I truly wish I could disagree with my sisters, but I, too, have seen nothing but violence and bravado from the Get. They seem to feel that we are their antithesis, which is an attitude both tribes *must* shed if we are to win the war.

Glass Walkers

Cara: The Glass Walkers are okay. Some of them are a little spooky, with their obsession with electronic gadgetry and that sort of thing — I keep hearing rumors of Glass Walkers with electronic implants, and I can't imagine most spirits approving of *that*. But they're damned useful if you have to go into the cities. They have money, they have places to stay, they know good places to party, and they have access to guns, and explosives, and body armor, and — well, you get the idea.

Konstantina: In the old days, when the Glass Walkers lived in the cities because it was the easiest way to keep tabs on thousands of humans, they served a good purpose. Today, I cannot help but believe that they are wrapped too tightly in the Namer's web to

serve Gaia. They may have useful trinkets and weapons that none of the other tribes play with, but they rely too heavily on them.

Red Talons

Cara: I can't apologize enough times to these guys for the crimes my human relatives did to them. Gaia's breath, I've tried. I've pretty much given up. They have a lot of hate, and the near-extinction of their species isn't something that one just gets over. I keep my distance when I can.

Konstantina: The Wyrm tempts these Garou; their hate is so strong, and they have so much Rage, that they come close to the door of Malfeas. Gaia help us if we were to lose them to the Black Spiral; their numbers may be few, but to lose them so soon after losing the Stargazers would be a blow from which the Garou Nation might not recover.

Shadow Lords

Cara: You know how the Get of Fenris like to give the impression that they're going to frenzy and eat your face at any second? The Shadow Lords like to give the impression that they're going to slink away and have you killed in your sleep on any given evening.

Konstantina: We seem to find ourselves in a new alliance with the Shadow Lords, here in Europe. And they aren't the Shadow Lords one always hears stories about. They patrol with us in the Balkans, side-by-side, and work with our packs as equals. They work to root out the Wyrm just as fiercely as we do. It's slightly unnerving. I am torn between feeling that perhaps the Silver Fangs' propaganda about them must have been wrong and feeling that they must have a dagger hidden around here someplace.

Symon cautions: No one ever identifies herself as "evil." The Shadow Lords do not indulge in skullduggery just because they enjoy it. They have a plan, and I shudder to consider that it seems to involve the Furies.

Silent Striders

Cara: I think I find these guys entertaining simply because they say so little. When they do comment on something it's a dry little joke or a remarkably perceptive observation. They are good traveling companions; it's a shame that they won't stay in one place and join up with our septs. We need more Garou like them.

Konstantina: Some Silent Striders want money or favors in return for sharing the intelligence they bring from all corners of the globe. Do not balk at this, daughter. Pay it. You will get far more than you bargained for. The Silent Striders are boon allies.

Silver Fangs

Cara: I don't know any Silver Fangs younger than about thirty-five. I guess the bloodlines are too thin over here for Falcon to accept them, or something. The ones I know are remarkably brave in a battle, but are not always coherent or useful outside of a fight. Someone needs to tell Falcon to loosen his loins a bit — I'm sure there are young Silver Fangs, but too few, as far as I can see.

Konstantina: They still rule the Garou Nation, and the King has my loyalty — after Gaia and the Inner Calyx, of course. When the Silver Fangs are coherent and directed, they are Garou out of legend: shining, honorable, and fierce. I simply rue that they are so infrequently coherent or directed.

Carlotta adds: Most national leaders are ridiculed without mercy, because every mistake they've ever made is on display for the world to see. The fact is, none of the tribes has a pristine history, the Fangs' history is just more widely known. That said, I must admit that lately they seem a bit… unstable.

Uktena

Cara: The Uktena look like the end result of a Klansman's nightmare: they're a delightful medium-brown, with the features of all six continents wrapped up in each face. The Uktena I know are good friends and valuable allies.

Konstantina: Too much time spent mucking with forces beyond their control taints these people, if you ask me. The first place to go if you want to know what the local Banes are up to is an Uktena. The last thing to ask yourself is where they got their information. Use them when you can, but neither rely on them nor trust them.

Symon grumbles: Bloody opportunists. In the War of Tears, they fought the Bunyip like everybody else, and then snapped up a lot of their caerns. You'll find caerns in America (North and South) that once belonged to other Fera now secure in Uktena hands. I'm not going to say they planned it that way, but they sure didn't stop it either.

Wendigo

Cara: The Wendigo remind me of the Red Talons in a lot of ways: sure, they got fucked, but they're still assholes. They could be a fantastic help in the war against the Wyrm if they could swallow their pride for just a minute or two.

Konstantina: Here in the Old World we do not encounter many Wendigo. They seem rather insular, and devoted to their homeland. This is something I can appreciate, of course, but it is somewhat near-sighted with the Apocalypse seemingly right around the corner. The Wyrm will devour the Pure Lands, too, wind-spirits. Still, they are brave and ferocious; good qualities to have on your side.

Stargazers

Cara: I never knew any Stargazers. I'm not sure I know what the big deal is.

Konstantina: The Stargazers were always caught between two worlds. It is disappointing that they chose to abandon this one in order to better serve their perception of the world's needs. I hope their newfound allies in Asia realize what they're getting.

The Breeds

For so long, we thought all the other shapeshifters were dead — thought, or feared. But now the rumors are so persistent that it seems many of them have managed to hang on after all, and that they might yet be our allies once more. Africa, Australia, the Amazon…recently, it seems like the rifts that tore the Fera asunder might be healing, slowly but surely. If this is true, then all of Gaia's children might well find occasion to rejoice. I only hope it happens in time.

Ajaba

I met a Fury once who claimed to have spoken with a werecheetah, who in turn told her of a race of werehyenas. These "Ajaba," she claimed, called themselves the "choosers of the slain" — a pretentious title if ever I heard one — and asserted that they were dead, to the last. A quaint story, I thought, no more than a sort of urban legend.

And then last year, I discovered that the door to the stacks had been forced and the books there toppled. The intruder had apparently found what he wanted, and there were curious-looking tracks leading out of the room. After cleaning up, I discovered that all that was missing was a handwritten journal by a missionary traveling in Africa, and of his experiences with a tribe living in fear of demon called Seb-at-Al. As I recall, the demon often took the form of a great hyena and carried away young women to serve as brood-mates for his followers. Coincidence, I hope.

Ananasi

Of course you've heard the story of Arachne, the proud weaver who challenged Athena to a contest to see who was more skilled at the loom… and lost. As punishment for her temerity, Athena turned her into a spider. I have no idea what the kernel of truth at the center of the tale might be, but I hear that the surviving spider-folk are bitter about something….

Bastet

While some Furies revere Panther as their totem, the cat-Fera have never truly been close allies. I think it is because their role is unclear — we're the warriors, and the Corax are the watchers, so what does that make the Bastet? They seem redundant at best.

However, they do learn many secrets that we miss. Getting them to give up these secrets, however, is usually more trouble than it's worth.

Corax

The ravens have a closer relationship with the Get and the Fianna than with us, but they do occasionally visit with the Furies. Their greatest warriors are female, which of course endears them to us somewhat. Should you ever chance to meet a Corax, make the most of the experience, and learn all you can.

Gurahl

I mourn the passing of the werebears. While I don't say it often, the folly that led to their murder could only have come from a man — a king. I think one of our tribe would have left well enough alone.

Symon disagrees: Of course, no tribe was exempt from fighting in the War of Rage. Sorry about that, but it's true.

Amethyst offers hope: I met a sister who said her pack followed Bear, and that Bear asked them to watch over her children. Maybe they aren't all dead?

Mokolé

Greek myths are replete with dragons: Ladon, Typhon, Python, Hydra, and so forth. They are never cast in favorable roles; most of them only exist for a hero to kill. That, to me, is all the more reason to make peace with the Mokolé. We all know how the legends portray witches and werewolves, and how accurate those legends are.

Nagah

Supposedly, the Nagah had strongholds in Egypt alongside the Silent Striders. Perhaps they foolishly stayed when the Striders fled, perhaps the Garou slaughtered them all in the War of Rage. I cannot mourn their passing without knowing more about who they were, however, and it is curious to me that so few tales of the wereserpents survive.

Nuwisha

I once saw a man approach a pack of Black Furies and hail them with "Hey, girls!" Of course, they surrounded him menacingly; he didn't flinch. They shoved him a bit; he didn't lose his smile. Finally, one of them asked him what he meant by addressing them so disrespectfully. He just grinned wider, and asked if they really *were* girls. And none of them knew how to answer him. After all, if they said "no", they would be denying their sex. If they said "yes", they'd look rather foolish. I don't remember any of them answering, but the Nuwisha just walked on, leaving them confused and frustrated.

Symon growls: This is why I don't like the werecoyotes. These stupid little games they play are supposed to teach,

but more often they just infuriate or injure. I've never liked practical jokes, and I don't like the notion of pushing someone's buttons just to teach them not to respond. You can lose your head doing that to the wrong person.

Ratkin

Symon mentioned earlier that the Ratkin share a totem — but little else — with the Bone Gnawers. All I know is that the Ratkin's rodent Kin spread disease and misery, and while I understand that disease is a necessary form of population control at times, that doesn't lessen the horror for those who have to suffer through it. I have no idea how many Ratkin still live today, but I don't trust any of them.

Rokea

I have never seen a wereshark, nor do I expect —

Anxi interrupts: Wereshark? That's strange — during our last revel I ran to a cliff where I could look out over the sea. I could see a school of sharks swimming away from the island, but they all looked different — one was a hammerhead, but the rest weren't. Do you think that there could be Rokea around Ecube?

The Others

Anything's possible, little sister. Other creatures share the unseen world with us, and it would behoove you to know something about them. Listen carefully.

Vampires

The Leeches hold dominion in the cities. Let the Glass Walkers and Bone Gnawers kid themselves all they like: the vampires thrive here, hiding among the human masses. We — the Garou — helped make it that way by frightening the humans into making their cities stronger and more easily defensible. The vampires moved in among them and fed on them secretly, and do so to this day.

Vampires support any attempt the humans make to undo and pave the natural world. That makes it easier to for them to find food. America holds large numbers of vampires, some of which move in packs and can stand against even the Garou in battle. In Europe, their numbers are fewer but each individual Leech is much older and more powerful. Their magics can enslave you, and some Garou, I'm told, have even turned against their packs to fight for undead masters. This kind of slavery is unconscionable, and any Garou who falls under such a yoke must be freed, one way or another.

Mages

Not all human spellcasters are bad; some of the *strega* are among them, and there are mages that respect Gaia's laws. Much more frequently, however, they look at Gaia's bounty and see "ingredients" or "resources" instead of spirits.

Amethyst interjects: Mages are dangerous and ignorant! My pack found a group of them living in America that had a young Black Fury living among them. When she Changed, they convinced her she was possessed and locked her in her room, and cast spells on her to stop her from changing. When we found her, she was so deep in Harano that we had to take her into the Umbra to our homelands to get her out! The mages were all women, but they didn't understand and nearly killed their sister. Beware of mages, Anxi, because they have power but don't know how to use it well.

Ghosts

The spirits of the dead do not always rest easily. While the Silent Striders know more than I do, I can say that a mother who dies in the pain of childbirth or a woman beaten to death might well linger on, searching for hope or revenge. If at all possible, grant these poor shades what they want and help them find peace.

Of course, sometimes the men we kill linger on in the same way. Unfortunately, we can't kill them twice.

Symon cautions: The dead aren't staying in the ground. A Silent Strider who recently stayed a night at my sept told stories of corpses coming up from the grave and hunting down humans that wronged them. So, Carlotta, it may indeed be possible to "kill them twice."

Changelings

The satyrs are rare in these dark, modern nights, but they are here. Some of them are complete pigs, so I'm told, but even so, they can be quite seductive. Remember that dream-folk are even less likely than normal men to still be there in the morning, and plan your trysts accordingly, should you choose to indulge.

Return

As Carlotta speaks, Anxi notices that Symon has disappeared. Before she can open her mouth to ask where he's gone, Amethyst fades from view, the wolfish smile still on her muzzle.

Anxi looks toward Carlotta, confused and frightened. Carlotta smiles, and waves to her. "We'll meet again, sister," she says. "Just be ready — you might have something to teach me then." And with that, she and the library disappear.

Anxi wakes by the pool to the scent of meat roasting. She shakes herself, then changes to wolf form and inhales deeply. Rabbit, she decides, and she realizes that she has slept by the Pool all day. She races off towards the smell — she has much to ask the elders.

Chapter Three: From Maiden to Crone

Woman is woman's natural ally.
— Euripides

Despite their detractors' feelings to the contrary, the Black Furies are anything but a homogeneous tribe full of "kick-ass warrior chicks." There are plenty of tools you can use as a player to differentiate even seemingly identical characters, say, two homid Philodox Black Furies. One of the most effective ways of doing so is the clever application of Backgrounds, camps, Gifts, and rites.

Backgrounds

Most Backgrounds can easily be customized to fit a Black Fury character in particular. Below are some ways to do that; of course, this shouldn't be seen as a comprehensive list or any kind of restriction. You should flesh your character out as you see fit, letting this list serve as inspiration for your own ideas.

Allies

Black Furies who join after abandoning their "blood" tribe frequently retain Garou allies among that previous tribe; they may be blood relations, or just friends the Fury made in her old life. Allies don't have to be Garou, of course; as many Furies are members of human political action groups such as Greenpeace, they often have close allies there.

Fury allies are rarely members of other supernatural races; only the Fair Folk have any kind of affinity for the Wyld, and they wouldn't even recognize the word. Worse, they are said to live under an outdated and repressive regime. Even those that don't live under such rulers are awfully hard to run into by chance, much less befriend.

Ancestors

It would certainly be worthwhile to decide what historical eras a character's Ancestors hail from. Those who lived in the very earliest days, the First Daughters, will be doggedly hard to take advantage of reliably. As totem spirits in their own right, they keep awfully busy — and besides, the spirit of a Black Fury who lived in the days before civilization won't be of much use to the average modern character. On the other hand, a Fury from the Golden Age of Athens is likely to know a good lot about sniffing out violators and destroying them, while a sometime nurse from the Great War era is probably quite skilled at dealing with aggravated damage from chemical weapons.

Contacts

For a Fury character to have Contacts solely from women's shelters, NOW, and the local college's Women's Studies program is the height of cliché. Black Furies are, in most ways, people. They run into

members of all groups and classes over the course of an average day; the bartender at a local biker bar probably has far more interesting and useful information than the cloistered professor. Contacts in the local feminist community certainly are appropriate for a character whose background implies them, but don't let that become a rut.

Fetish

The most commonly used fetish weapon among the Furies is not the klaive but rather the labrys, a two-headed war axe said to have been the favored weapon of Isthmene in the tribe's earliest days. Many of the most powerful fetish artifacts of the tribe (Fetish 4 and 5) are holdovers from the Furies' golden age in Greece and Mycenae, and those tend to retain distinctive Aegean styling. Most metal artifacts from those days are bronze, rather than steel, but as enchanted items, they rarely suffer as a result of their composition.

Modern Fury fetishes are practical tools (such as Dian's flashlight from "Unity in Alterity") as often as they are sacred artifacts. Most of these tools are designed to help the Furies track down and destroy transgressors against Gaia's law — not merely Wyrm and Weaver creatures, but human rapists and molesters or amoral corporate drones.

Kinfolk

As with all tribes save the Red Talons, Black Fury Kinfolk are generally humans; the few wolf Kin the Furies have are carefully tracked and treasured. Black Fury Kinfolk are much more likely to be Gaian in outlook than their neighbors, which means their ties to Christian or Muslim communities may be somewhat strained. On the other hand, such communities wouldn't be terribly surprised to see unusual people (like a typical pack of Garou) traipse in and out of the Kin's homestead.

Mentor

Black Furies' mentors are often of the Crone role, though some Mothers do take Cliath under their wing. Active Crones (of which there is no shortage) are certainly more capable in a fight than their more decrepit older sisters, but they are less able to come to a charge's aid, since they are so often attending to their own duties. Crones who have "retired" from active service — due to age or infirmity — are more available for instruction and advice, but are generally quite incapable of aiding a younger Fury in battle.

Furies may take mentors from other tribes — some metis do this, taking mentors from their father's tribe — but they are almost universally female Garou. For a young Black Fury of either gender to take a male mentor is a slap in the face to many older Furies.

Pure Breed

Furies with high levels of Pure Breed tend to have sleek, black coats in wolf form, and Mediterranean features in Homid form. Those with very high levels might tend to make human males uncomfortable just by spending time near them, but this probably only happens to those males already prone to discomfort near strong women. Pure Breed does not necessarily lead to social success within the Black Furies, as it might in a tribe like the Silver Fangs.

Resources

A Black Fury's level of Resources varies by location, camp, and politics; it is hard to make generalizations about this Background. Conservative Furies are more likely to invest in tracts of virgin wilderness, to help keep them pristine; progressives would prefer to have tools with which to fight the Wyrm. Those in Europe may have less liquid cash and more in the way of heirlooms, passed down through dozens of generations of Furies; but this is not a reliable indicator. Members of the Order of Our Merciful Mother who actually live within the Church do take vows of poverty, and so have low Resources scores; those of the Freebooters camp tend not to have large, immobile property, but might have nicely tricked-out vehicles and plenty of ready cash.

When figuring a character's Resources score, it's always good to take a moment and consider the source of her income. Some Black Furies do their best to hold day jobs, and use that income to support themselves (and, likely, their packmates and children). Others live as full-time Garou and rely on family money (some might even have Kinfolk spouses who work full-time jobs, with much of that money going into the tribe). Those who live in sufficiently wild areas as full-time Garou might have no need for Resources at all.

Rites

The Black Furies know dozens of rites that are kept from the eyes of male Garou, as well as from all other tribes; even a young Fury might be taught some of the Maiden rites, or other rituals kept away from the other tribes. Obviously, plenty of shared rituals are useful for all Garou: the Rite of Talisman Dedication is often too useful to go without, for homids. Certain *kuklos* may find that particular rites, either Fury or otherwise, are very useful: the Freebooters, for example, often use the Rite of Caern Opening and try to ensure that a member of every Freebooter pack knows the Rite of Caern Building or its Fury equivalent, Bearing the Caern (see below).

Totem

As members of mixed packs, Black Furies can follow any totem spirit that accepts them. And all-Fury packs do not necessarily have to adopt one of the traditional tribal

totems (Pegasus, one of the Gorgons, etc). However, many do. In recent times, the Gorgons, previously known as the Medusae, have become divided into five separate totems, each of the First Daughters adopting a set of packs to call her own. Players of characters in packs that previously followed the Medusae should pick one of the five sisters to follow in the future; alternately, they may prefer that the Storyteller make this selection for them, confronting their characters with an old new totem spirit all at once. See "Totems," below, for more information on this.

Furies rarely follow totems that they feel represent male dominance over women, such as Bull or Grandfather Thunder; they also eschew Weaver-totems like Cockroach.

Camps and Backgrounds

Members of given camps often concentrate in particularly appropriate backgrounds; as above, don't let the following list function as a straitjacket, but use it as you see fit.

• **Amazons of Diana**

As aggressive warriors of Gaia, the Amazons of Diana have pretty much the run of background options available to them; their main defining trait is that they believe, rightly, that they are the equals of any male Garou they encounter. Some live in a set location near a particular caern; these might develop ties to the local human community and build up the appropriate backgrounds. Others wander the globe hunting for corruption to smite, and would be better off taking different Backgrounds.

• **Bacchantes**

These primal sisters spend much of their time in the pursuit and destruction of those who violate Gaia's law. To that end, they tend to concentrate on Fetishes and Rites. Their Totem is nearly always Pegasus or one of the Gorgons (see "Totems," above, for the current state of the Gorgons). As traditionalists with fairly elitist attitudes, the Bacchantes tend to select its membership from among those Furies with high scores in Ancestors and Pure Breed, although those Backgrounds are not requirements for membership.

• **Freebooters**

As mentioned elsewhere, the Freebooters don't keep a lot of connection to human society, and have very few possessions to keep them tied down in any one place for long. As a result, few of them have high scores in Resources or Allies. Only rare Freebooters have the Kinfolk background; while they might have plenty of Kinfolk, they cannot cultivate ties to them. Freebooters often have decent scores in Fetish (discovered treasure) and Rituals (generally caern rites).

• **Moon-Daughters**

The Moon-Daughters have good relations with their Kinfolk of both genders, and many of them are capable enough to be considered Allies rather than "mere" Kinfolk — a few wise women among the Daughters' Kin practice real magic of a sort. The Moon-Daughters are among the most mystical of camps; their members have high scores in Rites (concentrating in mystic rites) and often they have plenty of Fetish as well, though their fetishes are rarely fetish weapons. Moon-Daughters foster good relations between older and younger members, and many younger Daughters have the Mentor background.

• **Order of Our Merciful Mother**

As a group composed largely of nuns — or those who conceal themselves as nuns — the Order rarely has members with high levels of Resources. Fetishes, too, would stand out too much to be acceptable in such a community. Garou of the Order have high levels of Allies and Contacts, however, tending as they do to human communities.

• **Sisterhood**

Members of the Sisterhood have decent levels of Kinfolk, Allies, and Contacts — their web of connections through human society gives them great latitude to move around as they wish. They can make a profit off of the various items they procure for other Garou — though they do not always do so — so it is perfectly reasonable for a member of the Sisterhood to have a good level of Resources.

• **Temple of Artemis**

Very few starting characters would be appropriate members of the Temple of Artemis; this camp consists mostly of older Mothers and Crones. Nearly hidebound traditionalists, the older Furies of the Temple have high scores in Rituals and Pure Breed. They rarely have points in Mentor, as they often serve as Mentors to younger Garou. Their Totem Backgrounds are often quite high, as they know best how to placate their own packs' guardian spirits.

Gifts

Gaia is generous with Her magical powers, and Luna and Pegasus look lovingly upon the Black Furies, offering them Gifts no other tribe possesses. Those abilities listed under "Tribal Gifts" may be taught to members of other tribes (with the additional cost usually associated with them). Camp Gifts and age role Gifts, however, are only available to Black Furies; the Gaian spirits that teach them refuse to teach members of any other tribe.

Tribal Gifts

• **Watchful Eyes (Level One)** — Since time immemorial, the Black Furies have been able to determine the location of those that break the laws of Gaia. Such beings (human, Garou, or spirit) are not always Wyrm- or Weaver-tainted; as in the classic example, Orestes was not under the influence of any supernatural being when he killed his mother Clytemnestra, but he did break Gaia's laws by doing so. This Gift has been the Furies' tool

for such a hunt; with a few moments' concentration, the Black Fury who uses Watchful Eyes can roughly determine the distance and direction to the nearest such criminal. This Gift is taught by an Owl-spirit.

System: The player spends 1 Gnosis and rolls Perception + Investigation (difficulty 6). Success indicates the distance and direction to the nearest violator of Gaia's laws (as interpreted by the Storyteller). Note that this Gift does not identify the lawbreaker, and it is somewhat vague: it has a margin of error of roughly 10% of the distance between the Garou and her quarry (that is, if the nearest violator is ten blocks away, the Gift will point out a one-block area). A botch causes this Gift to wrongly identify a potential target.

MET: You spend a moment in contemplation of Gaia's laws and rely upon your own spirituality to sense those who've violated or upset such laws. Find a Storyteller, spend one Trait of Gnosis and make a static Mental challenge, difficulty of six Traits (retest with *Investigation*); if you succeed, the Storyteller may point you roughly in the direction of the nearest violator of Gaia's laws.

Note that there may not always be such a violator within easy reach; it is quite possible for a Storyteller to announce "There are no violators within close proximity." Over-reliance on this Gift — a Fury who becomes obsessed with constantly using this Gift and tracking down and killing the victims — may, in and of itself, lead the *user* to transgression against Gaia's laws. Note also that because this Gift determines only a general area to a transgressor, it does not in any way defeat supernatural concealment. The Fury might learn "There is a transgressor nearby," but not exactly where or how to see him.

• **Kali's Tongue (Level Two)** — In the days of ancient myth, the Wyrm-creature Raktabija terrorized the Indian subcontinent. Raktabija could not be slain; every drop of blood that touched the earth sprang up another Raktabija. Soon after the battle against him began, the field was crowded with Raktabijas, each eager for the blood of Garou and Gaian spirits. The mother-goddess Parvati (an aspect of Gaia) finally took to the field against Raktabija, in her guise as the hideous demon-warrior Kali. Kali spread her tongue out over the battlefield and prevented any of Raktabija's blood from striking the Earth; she then commanded the Garou and gods present to destroy the Wyrm-creature, which they did.

The Gift Kali's Tongue removes a creature's ability to heal damage; its effects are relatively short-term, but if a creature is destroyed while the Gift is in effect, that death is permanent. What the Mother gives, the Mother's vengeance can take away. This Gift is taught by a Cobra-spirit.

System: The Fury must first touch the victim, then the player spends one Rage and rolls Manipulation + Medicine (difficulty of the foe's Rage, or Willpower -3, whichever is lower). Each success represents one turn during which the target creature cannot use any regenerative abilities, or heal inflicted damage naturally: Even supernatural healing Gifts like Mother's Touch will fail on the target during this period. This Gift works equally well on humans, Garou, and materialized spirits; spirits entirely in the Umbra are immune to the Gift's effects unless the Fury is also in the spirit world.

MET: You must best the target in a Social challenge, pitting your Social Traits against twice the lower of the victim's Rage or Willpower (use Willpower for victims without Rage), using *Medicine* Ability for retests. The subject cannot heal or be healed of any wounds by any means for the next full turn. Every two Social Traits you expend immediately after winning the test grants an extra full turn of duration to this Gift. Any subject killed while under the effects of this Gift dies permanently. Spirits in the Umbra are unaffected by *Kali's Tongue*.

• **Stoking the Soul's Fire (Level Two)** — Every aspect of a Fury's life has different strengths: the Maiden's fury at Gaia's pain is unmatchable, the Mother's will is indomitable, and the Crone's spirituality is beautiful and terrible. A Maiden Black Fury can use this Gift to replenish her natural strengths by sacrificing her suppressed natures. The Maiden's greatest strength is her anger; she can sacrifice from her will and spirituality to stoke that rage to scorching intensity. This Gift is taught by a Wolverine-spirit.

System: A Maiden using this Gift rolls Intelligence + Occult with a target of her own permanent Rage; she spends one point of temporary Willpower and one temporary Gnosis, and refills her Rage pool if she achieves 2 or more successes.

MET: Only a Maiden Fury may use this Gift. Make a static Mental challenge, difficulty of your permanent Rage Traits, with *Occult* Ability to retest. If you succeed, expend one Willpower, one Gnosis and two Mental Traits. You regain all of your temporary Rage.

• **Barring the Will (Level Three)** — The Mother's will is impossible to compromise when she does not wish to yield. She can sacrifice her anger and spirit energies to replenish her strength of purpose. This Gift is taught by a Donkey-spirit.

System: A Mother using this Gift rolls Intelligence + Occult with a target of her own permanent Willpower; she spends one point of temporary Rage and one temporary Gnosis, and refills her Willpower pool if she achieves 2 or more successes.

MET: Only a Mother Fury may use this Gift. Make a static Mental challenge, difficulty of your permanent Willpower Traits, with *Occult* Ability to retest. If you succeed, expend one Rage, one Gnosis and two Mental Traits. You regain all of your temporary Willpower.

• **Flames of Hestia (Level Three)** — The Black Furies revere the holy Wyld places of the world; part of the tribe's set of tools is the Flames of Hestia Gift, which enables a Black Fury to purify a person, spirit, or object with searing white-hot spiritual flame. The fire coruscates around the Fury's hands, enabling her to apply the Gift to anything she can touch. This Gift is taught by an avatar of Hestia the teacher.

System: Spend one Gnosis and roll Gnosis with a difficulty of 8. Success enables the Fury to cleanse tainted food or water, or heal damage caused by radiation, poison, or disease at one Health Level per success. The Flames of Hestia last for just one turn; however, a Fury can activate the Gift and strike at a foe in the same turn. Flames of Hestia do one level of unsoakable aggravated damage per success on the Gift roll, if used against a Bane or fomor in hand-to-hand combat.

MET: Expend one Gnosis Trait and make a static Gnosis challenge, difficulty of eight Traits. You may touch an object and cleanse it of any taint of disease, poison or radiation. If you use the *Flames of Hestia* on a creature, this cures one health level of damage lost to such taint, and may (Storyteller's discretion) purge the taint from the subject's system. Used in combat, you can strike with your fire-wreathed hands (subject to normal unarmed combat rules) and inflict an extra level of aggravated damage that cannot be reduced by any means.

• **Bolster the True Name (Level Four)** — The Crone has no need of a child's rage, and her wiles are enough to let her survive the day that the Mother's stalwart nature fails her. She can sacrifice her hatred and will to reinvigorate her spiritual connections. This Gift is taught by a Lune.

System: A Crone using this Gift rolls Intelligence + Occult with a target of her own permanent Gnosis; she spends one point of temporary Rage and one temporary Willpower, and refills her Gnosis pool if the roll achieves 2 or more successes.

MET: Only a Crone Fury may use this Gift. Make a static Mental challenge, difficulty of your permanent Gnosis Traits, with *Occult* Ability to retest. If you succeed, expend one Rage, one Willpower and two Mental Traits. You regain all of your temporary Gnosis.

Camp Gifts

As noted above, the secrets of the following Gifts are hoarded jealously by members of various camps. While it is not inconceivable that a Fury could learn an out-of-camp Gift, no non-Black Fury Garou can learn any of the Gifts in this section.

Amazons of Diana

• **True Shot (Level One)** — The accuracy of Artemis on the hunt could not be equaled by any other; this Gift allows Maidens to replicate their aunt's spectacular feats of archery on the battlefield or on the hunt. It is less effective for Mothers and Crones than for Maidens, but still gives them some benefit. This Gift is taught by a Lune.

System: Spend a point of Rage and receive +3 to your dice pool for a single arrow shot. Mothers and Crones receive only a +2 bonus; Luna is said to favor those Garou who replicate her own aspect as Artemis. This Gift can be used in conjunction with Flurry of Arrows, below, but can be used for only one arrow per turn.

MET: Expend one Rage Trait to gain a three-Trait (Maiden) or two-Trait (Mother or Crone) bonus on the resolution of a single arrow shot. This can exceed your usual Trait maximum, but functions only once in a turn.

• **Flurry of Arrows (Level Two)** — The bow of Artemis slew many monsters of both human and Black Fury myth; the incarnation of Luna as maiden huntress was a swift and accurate shot with the bow. Appropriately, Luna has taught her children how to nock and release arrows more rapidly than a human might follow. This Gift is taught by a Lune.

System: Spend a point of Rage; for the remainder of the scene, the character receives a free shot per turn from a bow (though not a crossbow) at no dice pool penalty. Thus, the character could simply take two bow shots, each at no penalty, or she might take three shots, and suffer a -2 on the first shot, -3 on the second, and no penalty on the shot granted by Flurry of Arrows.

MET: Expend one Rage Trait. While using a bow, you gain one extra arrow shot per turn, in addition to any other actions you may take. This is not cumulative; you cannot use multiple *Flurry of Arrows* Gifts to gain several extra shots per turn. *Flurry of Arrows*, once invoked, lasts for the remainder of the scene/hour.

• **Blizzard of Arrows (Level Four)** — The Black Fury who uses this Gift truly shows herself the equal of any man — or machine — on the battlefield. Once Blizzard of Arrows is activated, the Garou deals out nightmarish pain to the hordes that oppose her. Heroes with this Gift might single-handedly have turned cavalry charges, in the days when such things still took place. For today, however, the Fury with this Gift is the perfect ally when faced by hordes of Wyrm-creatures. This Gift is taught by a Porcupine-spirit.

System: Spend a point of Willpower and two points of Rage, and you may take a single arrow shot (at no multi-action penalty) at every foe within 100 yards, to a maximum of 20 enemies. Simply roll to hit once, using the sight and range penalties for the hardest-to-hit foe in range, and apply that number of successes against each enemy, which individually may soak, dodge, etc, as the Storyteller sees fit.

This Gift is limited by the number of arrows you have on hand: all arrows that you intend to shoot must be someplace that they can easily be nocked and shot from (in a quiver on the back or waist, or stuck point-first into the ground in front of you; lying scattered nearby will not suffice). The bow and arrows may be of modern manufacture, but cannot use any exceptional Weaver-based equipment (such as laser sights or explosive tips) to gain any accuracy or damage bonus. However, a fetish bow shooting talen arrows is certainly acceptable.

MET: Expend one Willpower and two Rage Traits. You may immediately take an arrow shot (subject to having a bow and enough mundane arrows in arm's reach) at every target you can see with your own unaugmented senses, up to a maximum of 20 targets.

Bacchanantes

• **Rend (Level Two)** — The Furies of myth did not use swords or axes to destroy the enemies of the Gods; the Black Furies of old did not use weapons to slay enemies of Gaia. They used teeth and claws, and sheer animal might. While many Bacchantes certainly do use the tribe's ritual labrys and bow, and others carry klaives and other fetish weapons, when they frenzy they most often fight with their natural weapons. Even out of frenzy, the Bacchantes recognize the intimidation factor of rending a foe with fang and claw, and many revel in its primal nature. Rend allows the Bacchantes to rip through substances that they could not ordinarily pierce, and do as much damage with their natural weapon as another might with a human's sword. This Gift is taught — sometimes to great comic effect — by a wine-spirit.

System: Spend 1 Rage and roll Strength + Primal Urge (difficulty 6). For each success, the Fury gains the ability to rip through tough substances for one turn. When wearing any of the three "war forms" (Glabro, Crinos, or Hispo) and using hand-to-hand maneuvers, the character ignores the first three dice of the target's soak pool — the target rolls three fewer dice to soak. This ability to pierce defenses also applies to inanimate objects such as walls and doors, making it considerably harder to hide from Black Furies inside buildings or underground. In the case that a given object does not have a soak or armor rating, treat the Fury's Strength as being three higher for purposes of the Feat of Strength needed to rip through the object.

Successful uses of Rend to destroy a wall, door, or enemy add 3 dice to the Fury's next Intimidation roll against those who saw her do so.

MET: Expend one Rage Trait and make a static Physical Challenge, difficulty of seven Traits, with *Primal Urge* for retests. If you succeed, you may tear

through any object up to the strength of iron or stone with your claws while in any war form. This Gift lasts for one turn, plus an additional turn for each Physical Trait you expend upon activation. Your claw and bite attacks are automatically armor piercing for this duration. If you *Rend* a suitably hefty target, you may on your next turn claim three additional Social Traits for resolution of an intimidation-related challenge, if desired.

• **Storm of Mother's Wrath (Level Five)** — When the Black Furies take up arms to destroy an enemy of Gaia, they are like unto a force of nature. Should a pack of Bacchantes include one with Storm of Mother's Wrath, they nearly *become* a force of nature. The Fury wielding this Gift causes a fearful dark hailstorm to erupt, even out of a clear sky; the pack of Bacchantes, however, are not inconvenienced by the storm, and can move around and fight in it without difficulty. Signs of such a hailstorm in the area tends to be a red flag to Wyrm creatures, who know that a pack of Furies must be involved in a desperate fight; they may move to join in, or they may wait in ambush outside of the storm. A Mammatus, a Wyld-spirit of the air, teaches this Gift.

System: Spend a point of Gnosis and roll Stamina + Survival (difficulty 7). The storm has a 100-meter diameter and a duration of one minute. Every success on the roll extends the storm's diameter by 100 meters, and extends its duration by 1 minute. Physical beings caught within the storm — humans, Garou, fomori, and materialized spirits — take a 3-die penalty to all physical dice pools. The exception to this is the pack of the character responsible for the storm; that group receives no penalty. Humans react to the storm as though faced with the Delirium; most will attempt to flee its fury. The storm cannot be generated indoors or underground, and its effects will not penetrate solid walls (though the pelting hail can and does break glass windows).

MET: Expend one Gnosis Trait and make a static Physical Challenge, difficulty of eight Traits, with *Survival* for retests. If you succeed, you summon a storm that affects everything within your unaugmented sensing distance (as far as you can naturally see and/or hear), so long as you are outdoors. Everyone within the *Storm of Mother's Wrath*, except for you and your pack, suffers a three-Trait penalty to the resolution of physical challenges. Delicate items (glass, crystal, papier mâché, balsa) caught in the storm may be broken by the hail.

You must have a Storyteller on hand when you summon this storm, in order to adjudicate its range and effects. The storm lasts for one conflict/minute.

Freebooters

• **Messenger's Fortitude (Level Two)** — As the Silent Strider Gift.

• **Omen of Power (Level Two)** — The Freebooters are famed among the Garou for their ability to find items and places of great magical power. Some believe that they follow Wyld-spirits in their nearly-random wandering through the Umbra; others say the Freebooters can sense the perturbations of even the weakest ley lines. Regardless of the true nature of their abilities, many Freebooters can sniff out the locations of dormant caerns (that is, those once opened whose power has since faded). When conditions are right, they can even sense particularly powerful fetishes from a distance. This Gift is taught by a Hound-spirit.

System: Spend one Gnosis and roll Perception + Enigmas; the difficulty is known only to the Storyteller, and is based on the distance to the source of power. Success means that the rough distance and direction to a mystic power source is revealed to the Black Fury. The source of power can be an active or dormant caern, or a level 5+ fetish. The base difficulty for the roll is 7, if the source of power is within ten miles; decrease it by 1 if the distance is less than 1 mile, and increase it by 1 if the distance is between ten and twenty miles — Omen of Power cannot detect sources of power greater than twenty miles distant. This difficulty is decreased by 2 if the source of power is an active caern, and increased by 1 if it is a fetish rather than a dormant caern.

By default, this Gift is accurate to within about 20% — if a caern is within 10 miles, Omen of Power will give its distance and direction to within about 2 miles. Additional successes on the Gift's activation roll decrease that margin of error by 5% per success, but never to less than 5%. The Gift can be re-used as the Garou close in on a source of power, to further refine their target's location. Omen of Power does not tell the Garou anything about the source of power other than its direction and distance; she will not even know whether it is a caern or fetish.

Example: *Talisha, a Freebooter, wishes to find a nearby source of magical power. She spends one Gnosis and rolls Perception + Enigmas to discover if anything is nearby. The Storyteller, knowing that there is an active Black Spiral Dancer Hive about fifteen miles away, calculates the difficulty as follows: the base is 7, +1 for such a long distance, -2 for the source being an active caern. That makes the final target 6; he looks at Talisha's roll and sees that she has earned 2 successes. That means that she'll have a decent idea where the source of power is, to within about 10% of its distance from her, or one and a half miles. Of course, she won't know it's a Spiral caern until she gets up close....*

MET: You can expend a Gnosis Trait and attempt a static Mental Challenge (*Enigmas* for retests) to try to sniff out sources of magical power; the base difficulty is determined by a Narrator, based on the distance and strength

of any nearby magical emanations. You must have a Narrator on hand to guide you as you follow Umbral perturbations in an attempt to sense caerns, magical items and similar concentrations of mystic energy.

It is advised that use of this Gift be limited to actions "between games," so that a Fury can sniff out dormant caerns or magical items and give the Storytellers sufficient time to prepare appropriately at the next game session. Using this Gift extensively in the course of a game may monopolize the attention of Storytellers, who may simply decree that "No magical emanations (other than already-known caerns and fetishes) are within range," and still deduct the appropriate Gnosis cost.

Moon-Daughters

• **Spirit Loan (Level Two)** — In extreme circumstances, a Moon-Daughter may find that another Garou has far more use for one of her Gifts than she does. To this end, Gaian spirits have shown the Daughters how to lend one of their Gifts to another werewolf for a limited duration. The Black Fury who uses this Gift feels somewhat bereft of Gaia's love and attention while another Gift has been loaned, but suffers no other ill effects. This Gift is taught by a Hen-spirit.

System: Roll Charisma + Occult (difficulty of the recipient's Rage). Success allows the Fury to loan a single Rank 1 Gift to another Garou for a set period of time, to a maximum of three days per success. When that time is up (or if either the lender or receiver dies) the Gift returns to the lender. While the Gift has been lent out, the lender has no access to it and for all intents and purposes does not know it. The recipient uses the Gift as though she had learned it herself from the appropriate spirit: she uses her own dice pools for success, and spends her own Gnosis, Rage, or Willpower to activate it. A Black Fury can only lend one Gift out at a time, although there is no limit to the number of "loaned" Gifts a person may receive at any one time. She may loan out Gifts that ordinarily cannot be taught (for instance, she might loan a non-Black Fury the Amazons of Diana's True Shot Gift, above), though if her tribemates discover her "indiscretion," the social consequences might be dire. A Fury cannot use Spirit Loan to lend out Spirit Loan.

MET: Make a static Social Challenge (*Occult* retest) against a subject. If you succeed, you may lend the subject one of your Basic Gifts. You specify a duration, after which time the Gift returns to you. While the Gift is loaned out, you are unable to use it yourself. The subject can learn any Basic Gift that you're willing to loan, except for this one. Use of *Spirit Loan* to give out tribal secret Gifts may result in a loss of Renown, at the very least.

Order of Our Merciful Mother

• **Mother's Touch (Level One)** — As the Theurge Gift.

• **Truest Sacrament (Level Two)** — The Order of Our Merciful Mother frequently leavens Christian ceremony with Gaian supplication, to better aid their flocks. Truest Sacrament enables them to do so without rousing the suspicion of the faithful; humans with faith in Christianity see Gaian ritual as innocuous and even appropriate, after this Gift's application. In so doing, the Furies are better able to free the most dogmatic and closed-minded followers of patriarchal faiths to accept a broader spiritual mindset. This Gift takes advantage of humans' ability to rewrite their memories of an event to suit their preconceptions in the same way that the Delirium does. This Gift is taught by a Unicorn-spirit.

System: Truest Sacrament can be used either before or after a Gaian ritual begins. Used before a ritual, the character must make a Charisma + Subterfuge roll, with a target equal to the highest Willpower of the surrounding crowd; she will need to achieve one success for every seven onlookers. Should the Fury succeed, the next Gaian ritual she participates in will seem innocuous and appropriate to the crowd on hand. If Truest Sacrament is used during or after a ritual — if one or more humans happen upon a group of Garou during a rite — the same dice pool as above is used, but the character must also spend one point of Gnosis.

Note that Truest Sacrament will not cover up truly egregious or spectacular violations of the Veil — spattering blood, spirit fireworks, and so on, will be remembered and probably not thought of as harmless or normal. But if the rite is simpler, or the more hallucinatory effects can somehow be concealed from witnesses, the Furies may get away with it.

The salutatory effects of this Gift on the psyches of the most reactionary and closed-minded humans should be roleplayed out over time; there is no explicit game effect.

MET: Make a Social Challenge (*Subterfuge* for retests) against the individual with the highest Willpower in the group you wish to affect — the difficulty is twice the target's permanent Willpower. If you invoke *Truest Sacrament* after performing a rite, you must also expend one Gnosis Trait. If you succeed, then any one rite or ritual you perform that has no egregiously violent or visibly supernatural effects is considered mundane to any human witnesses, who have no memory of the ritual being anything more than a simple religious celebration (and probably a non-denominational one). The witnesses only remember vague terms of the ritual: That it involved a speech, or perhaps some prayer; witnesses will agree on the general form of the ritual, but do not remember any religious specifics.

Sisterhood

• **Spirit Smuggler (Level One)** — Members of the Sisterhood frequently make deliveries through countries with broad laws against contraband; they might also wish to carry a weapon into an area interdicted by metal detectors or the like. Spirit Smuggler makes this much easier for them to do, and it is useful in a wide variety of situations. When the character wishes to hide an item from searches, she can use this Gift to push the item into the Gauntlet for a short time; it will return to the character's possessions in the physical realm after a few minutes have passed. This Gift is taught by a Raccoon-spirit.

System: The character rolls Dexterity + Subterfuge and spends a point of Gnosis to push a small item (5 pounds or less, no more than a gallon in volume) through the Gauntlet into the Umbra; the difficulty on this roll is the local Gauntlet rating. If she achieves 2 or more successes, the item now resides in the Gauntlet, and cannot be sensed or manipulated by anyone in the Realm (unless a searcher can see into the Umbra). The item will return to the character's physical possessions at the end of the scene. Should the character achieve only one success, the item is pushed through into the Gauntlet but will not return of its own accord, and has to be fetched by stepping sideways. A botch on the Dexterity + Subterfuge roll means that the item is lost in the Umbra, or that a spirit pickpocket has made off with it. This Gift does not halt the flow of time for the smuggled object — and explosions in the Gauntlet can have strange effects on both the local spirit world and the physical plane, for those who might consider using this Gift to stow a live bomb.

MET: Expend one Gnosis Trait and make a static Physical Challenge (*Subterfuge* for retests) against the local Gauntlet rating. If you succeed, you can push a small object — something you could easily hold in one hand, no more than a few inches in diameter — into the Gauntlet itself, where it stays for one scene/hour before returning to you.

• **Winged Delivery (Level Three)** — While the Sisterhood has a large network of Kinfolk, contacts, smugglers and informants available, at times the most effective means to move an item is to give it to a friendly spirit and have that spirit make the delivery. Using this Gift and some concentration, the character pushes a small item into the Umbra and gives it to an Owl Jaggling, which will deliver the item to a well identified person or location as rapidly as it can travel.

Garou who abuse this Gift to send dangerous items or active weapons (like grenades) into the Umbra — thereby jeopardizing the owl-spirit's existence —find that the retribution of the spirit world is swift and harsh. This Gift is obviously taught by owl-spirits.

System: Spend one Gnosis and roll Charisma + Empathy (difficulty is the local Gauntlet). On a success, the item enters the Owl Jaggling's talons in the Umbra, and the Jaggling will deliver it to a clearly defined recipient. A human or Garou recipient must be named and described; a location need only be described, with directions given. The Owl Jaggling travels at roughly 100 miles per hour through the spirit world, and will deposit the item in the immediate vicinity of the target unless the target is somehow protected against the spirit world or the prevailing Gauntlet exceeds 7. If either of those conditions prevent delivery, the spirit returns to the Garou at full speed and returns the item without comment.

MET: Expend one Gnosis Trait and make a static Social Challenge (*Empathy* for retests) against the local Gauntlet. If you succeed, you deliver one item to an Owl Jaggling, which carries the item to a target you describe. If the subject cannot be found, is shielded from the spirit world or is in a location with a Gauntlet above 7, the owl spirit returns the item to you instead. Hand your item card to a Narrator, who will then deliver the item as you specify (or take it out of play, if appropriate); the time for the Gift to function depends solely on the Narrator's ability to deliver it to your subject. (If the Narrator spends half an hour looking for your target, then the owl-spirit was similarly confused in its attempt to find the subject.)

The Temple of Artemis

• **Walk With Hades (Level Five)** — When Persephone entered the lands of the dead with Hedes, her lover, her mother, Demeter, the harvest goddess, went in after her. As an aspect of Gaia, Demeter understood her daughter's desire for Hades, but refused to let a powerful spirit remain in the deadlands for long. Eventually, Persephone acquiesced to return to the living realm, under the agreement that she could periodically return to Hades' side, and could return to the Underworld eventually.

Demeter agreed to this arrangement verbally, but eventually performed a secret ritual to block her daughter from entering the realms of the dead. Such travel is, after all, counter to the proper way of things. Embittered by her now-permanent separation from her lover, Persephone taught a number of favored Black Furies the secret roads into the land of the dead; these secrets have been passed down by Persephone's servitor spirits and aged Garou to the present day. Technically, use of this Gift violates one of Gaia's laws — "The living live, and the dead remain dead." But since it is only used by the most ancient and respected Black Furies, and even then only in the most extreme circumstances, few punishments have come down onto those forced to use it.

System: Spend 1 Gnosis and roll Gnosis (the difficulty is the local Gauntlet) to step sideways into the lands of the dead. If the Fury succeeds, she enters the Dark Umbra rather than the Penumbra. She can remain there for only a single day (24 hours), after which point she must cross back to the mortal realm (rolling to step sideways as usual) or risk eternal capture in the ghost-world. If the character takes more than 24 hours to return, the Gauntlet equivalent increases by 1 for every 2 hours the Fury remains past the deadline: when it reaches 10, the Fury is trapped and will begin her afterlife as a ghost. She will not become an ancestor-spirit.

The dead lurk near places, people, and things that were important to them in life, and they are creatures of almost pure emotion in death. They are still coherent, thinking beings, but are occasionally possessed of a terrible hate and fury toward the living, and may attack without provocation. When not so enraged, they do have most of their memories of life, and are likely to be willing to answer the Fury's question if the two were friendly in life. This scene should be roleplayed out: no dice roll is an appropriate way to describe a character's encounter with a deceased loved one.

Note: Storytellers with access to **Wraith: the Oblivion** are welcome to use that game's version of the afterlife — in place of the Gauntlet rating, use the local Shroud, and so on.

MET: Expend one Gnosis Trait and make a challenge to step sideways. If you succeed, you enter the ghostly Dark Umbra. You are physically in the Underworld and can affect the ghosts of the departed, but similarly can be affected by them. You must leave within a day of crossing over — otherwise, every scene/hour the effective Gauntlet increases (for you only) by one, and once it reaches 10, you become a ghost, dead and trapped in the Underworld.

Rites

Unlike Gifts, rites are always passed from one Garou to the next. Most of the rituals below are considered sacred (and secret) to the Black Furies; their natures are hidden from members of other tribes. Even those rituals that are not secret of the Black Furies will never knowingly be shown to a male of another tribe; a male of another tribe who reveals knowledge of such a rite to a Black Fury risks his own life.

Rites of Accord

Rite of Motherhood

Level One

This simple Rite marks a Fury's shift from Maiden status to Mother status. As is noted elsewhere, the title "Maiden" is not strictly accurate; the spirits begin to treat a Fury as a Mother as soon as she becomes pregnant. In some septs, this spiritual change is sufficient, while in others it might take until the child is born, and in the most conservative septs a Fury is considered a Maiden until she gives birth to a child who lives for one lunar year. Regardless of when the sept declares the Fury to be a Mother, when the time is right, this ritual is performed.

Mother and child are separated, and the young mother is bound — this may be simply a symbolic binding, a rope lightly draped over her, or it may be shackles and chains. The mother breaks free of the bonds and comes to her child's side while the Mothers and Crones of the sept watch; when she reaches her child again, the older women of the tribe welcome her.

System: There are no game mechanics to this rite, though the Fury may have to make a Strength or Willpower roll to escape from sufficiently strong bonds.

MET: Use the Rite of Motherhood as an in-play recognition of a Fury's transition from Maiden to Mother. Follow the usual rules for performance of a Rite; no special benefit is given, aside from the social transition to Mother status. The difficulty to break free of the symbolic bindings may be nominal (a simple rope) or extreme (ten Traits or more, for chains).

Ritual of Acceptance

Level Two

Although a Garou can give up her tribal affiliation with the Rite of Renunciation (see **Werewolf: the Apocalypse**, p. 157), the Black Furies have their own ritual to welcome a female Garou from another tribe into their own. The prospective Black Fury must fast for 24 hours to purify her body; afterward, she enters a ritual circle while her tribemates-to-be quietly invoke Pegasus from outside the same circle.

System: The invocation takes a few hours (the Mistress of the Rite should roll Charisma + Occult with a target of the local Gauntlet; the invocation takes 5 hours, minus one for every success after the first, with a minimum of 1 hour). At the end of this period, an avatar of Pegasus arrives. The prospective Fury must prove her worth to the avatar. This may involve a test, at the Storyteller's discretion, or it may simply involve a roll of Charisma + Etiquette (difficulty 7). A failure on this roll means that the Fury-to-be must complete a spirit quest to join the tribe; a botch means that she has somehow offended Pegasus and is not welcome to join.

Should the character succeed, however, she is welcomed into the Black Fury tribe, and will be treated as a child of Pegasus from that point forward.

MET: After a female werewolf performs the appropriate fasting and cleansing ceremony (which may require a short scene of roleplay, if the character is particularly impulsive or has very high Rage), the Black

Furies perform this ritual in a circle led by the Mistress of the Rite. The rite caster makes a static Social Challenge against the Gauntlet, using *Occult* for retests. If the rite succeeds, an avatar or Pegasus appears (via the Spirit Keeper), and the prospective candidate must prove her worth to the Black Fury tribe to the satisfaction of Pegasus. The challenge should be role-played out and may include tests of the subject's skills, martial prowess, wisdom or judgement, and will certainly be very difficult for more accomplished and renowned Garou (who must stand tall to be worthy of their rank and similarly must be exemplary so that they never give shame to their new tribe). Should the subject succeed in this task to the satisfaction of the Storytellers, the individual becomes a Black Fury; otherwise, the spirit of Pegasus departs without accepting the woman.

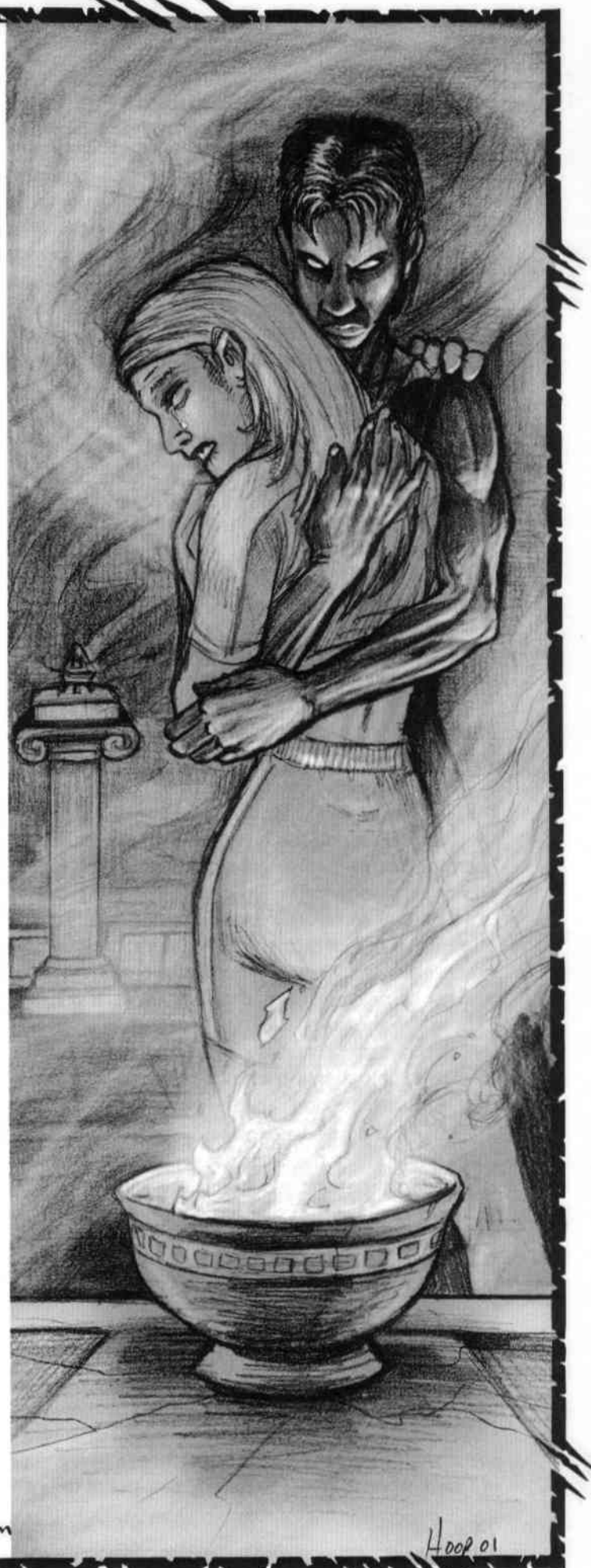
Soothe the Scars

Level Two

Black Furies perform this rite on human women and children that have suffered at the hands of an abusive spouse or parent. Such abuse can harm the soul in ways still unknown to the Black Furies, but it is certain that sufficient abuse can open a hole wide enough for a Wyrmling to crawl into. It is in the Furies' nature to stop such a fate, and while it is their *modus operandi* to put a halt to such abuse (violently, if need be), Soothe the Scars is one of the Furies' best tools for healing abuse once it has been stopped.

The rite itself is designed to put the victims at ease immediately; the smoke of gentle incense and scented candles should fill the air, and inoffensive soft music — not necessarily "spiritual" music; folk songs or children's music are equally appropriate — should play. In the case of victims not acquainted with Gaian spirituality, prayers are offered to the "spirit of motherhood across the world," though prayers to Gaia can be said in their place. Memories of abuse are coaxed from the victim, and each one is symbolically cast into a purifying fire. When the rite is over, the victim can begin the long road to real spiritual healing without risking a fall backward into a dangerous cycle of self-degradation. This rite has no game effect; the Storyteller should adjudicate its roleplaying effects.

MET: The *Soothe the Scars* rite functions according to the normal rules for performing a rite, but has limited game mechanical effects. Typically, this is a subject for roleplaying when the Furies hope to aid victims of abuse (hopefully, after dealing with their tormentors). The Storyteller may elect to give the subjects of a successful *Soothe the Scars* rite an extra Willpower Trait to resist further self-destructive impulses or Derangements related to their abuse, which can aid in the process of recovery.



Fertility Rite

Level Three

Many Garou and human women lack the ability to give birth on their own; perhaps they were born with congenital reproductive difficulties, or have become infertile due to the influence of Wyrm-created technology or chemicals. In the case of Garou, battle scars and similar wounds often lead to infertility. This ritual invokes spirits of fertility, often avatars of Gaia in the Mother aspect, to return fertility to those without. This ritual also improves any ordinarily fertile subject's chance of conceiving. The Fertility Rite does work on males, but it's almost never performed on them. It also works on wolves, and is occasionally used in secret by those Garou who have access to zoos and their wolf populations. The rite does not work on metis, not that Furies would be so arrogant as to try such a thing.

The subject of the ritual removes all clothing save possibly a homespun robe, and sits or lays in an obviously growing area: in the midst of a healthy forest, or in tall grass. The Mistress of the Rite traces a circle around the subject, using the menstrual blood of a fertile woman. The Mistress of the Rite then invokes the spirits of Gaia for their aid in restoring the woman's birthright to her. In the case of battle scarring or injury, Gifts such as Mother's Touch may be brought to bear during the Rite, but those Gifts alone will not heal the woman's injury.

System: At the heart of the ritual, the Mistress of the Rite should roll Charisma + Medicine (difficulty of the local Gauntlet) to heal the subject. Failure or botching has no further adverse affect on the target; otherwise, the woman's womb will be restored to health in (6 minus successes) weeks. If, rather than healing infertility, the Mistress of the Rite intends to improve an otherwise fertile woman's chances of conceiving, the number of successes should simply serve as a rough indicator to the Storyteller how much more likely it is that the character conceives. The ritual works similarly for men; simply change references above from "conception" to "impregnation" and the general rules apply.

MET: The rite caster makes a static Social Challenge, difficulty of the Gauntlet rating, with *Medicine* Ability for retests. If successful, the subject will be rendered fertile within one lunar month. An already fertile subject gains an increased chance of conception. Since there are no hard-and-fast rules for these issues in game play, it's up to the Storyteller to adjudicate their effects, if such matters should arise in your game.

Caern Rites

Meandering Path

Level Three

The Freebooters represent one of the premiere groups of Garou when it comes to finding new places to open caerns. Such locations have become extremely rare in these End Times, but every few years another pack of Freebooters will call nearby Garou to open a brand-new caern. The Meandering Path rite is the primary tool in finding such prospective sites. Its use is not easy, or rapid, but over a long period of time it helps Freebooters settle on a worthwhile location for a new caern.

Finding an appropriate location for a new caern has always been difficult and time-consuming; in these days, with a high Gauntlet and the Wyrm and Weaver crowding Gaia in at all times, it's even harder.

In the last few years, the Order of Our Merciful Mother camp of Black Furies has begun to develop a rite similar to this one, which works in appropriately spiritual parts of cities. The Order has approached some Freebooter Theurges for aid with the rite, and that cooperation seems to be leading down a fruitful path.

System: First, find an appropriately pristine patch of wilderness by rolling Perception + Survival, difficulty 9 after a week's worth of investigation. Success on this roll will indicate a broad swath (perhaps a square mile, or even more) with high enough traces of the Wyld that the characters might find a suitable home for a caern within. This roll will automatically fail if the wilderness the character investigates is unsuitable for a caern; if this is the case, success on the Perception + Survival roll will correctly indicate that the entire area is unsuitable. A botch on the Perception + Survival roll may, at the Storyteller's discretion, suggest a particularly inappropriate location (one with a history of Wyrm or Weaver activity) for a prospective caern.

Then, spend a point of Gnosis and roll Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 9) to carefully explore this swath of land for a low enough Gauntlet and the favor of the spirits. The Garou must collect ten successes on this extended roll; each roll and Gnosis expenditure represents three days of communing with the spirits and cautiously investigating the terrain. Note that if multiple Freebooters in the same pack have this Gift, they can pool successes, but the investigation still takes a minimum of three days to complete.

Once a sufficient number of successes have been gained, the Furies still must use the Rite of Caern Building (or Bearing the Caern, below) to actually create the Caern. This Gift simply points out the best location for such a thing to be done.

MET: Use a static Mental Challenge with *Survival*, difficulty of nine Traits, to sniff out a likely spot of wilderness for caern building. This rite requires a great deal of time and examination to function — it's not as simple as hopping into the woods and finding a place for everyone to build a new caern at the next game. At the end of each game after first casting the rite, make a new

Mental Challenge, using *Enigmas* instead of *Survival*. After accumulating ten successes, you locate an area most suitable for caern building. Note that it's possible that *no* area within a specific swatch of wilderness may be appropriate for caern building; if this is the case, you'll gain this information after succeeding the initial challenge.

Bearing the Caern

Level Five

While Black Furies may use the Rite of Caern Building (**Werewolf**, p. 158), many traditionally prefer this ritual, which ties the opening of a spiritual site in with one of Gaia's other most sacred mysteries. After the Furies discover, cleanse, and purify an appropriate area, they simply wait until an appropriate focus for the ritual is ready.

The focus, called *Maia* during the rite, is a pregnant female who is near to term. She can be human, Garou, or wolf — though a Garou who is heavy with a metis child is an especially inauspicious choice. The woman need not be Kinfolk, but if she is not, she may well suffer the effects of the Delirium if any of the Furies in the rite enter a war-form. In the event that the involved Garou feel that they cannot wait for one of their own (or one of their Kin) to reach term, they may kidnap a likely-seeming human or wolf female to act as *Maia*. In the End Times, this practice is becoming distressingly common.

When *Maia* is near labor, she is brought to the center of the caern-to-be; female Garou surround her, singing hymns to Gaia. Non-Furies may be present, but they must be female; male metis of other tribes are forbidden, though Fury male metis are allowed. A single Crone may aid the mother during labor, but no other assistance can be given: the Furies present must instead fill their hearts with love for Gaia, beseeching her to take *Maia* as an inspiration, and create a caern here with the child's birth.

Should the rite succeed (see below) it is said that fates of the newborn child and caern are tied for the remainder of the child's life. The newborn is forever after immune to the Delirium, even if she is neither Garou nor Kinfolk. Different septs will treat *Maia* and the newborn caern-child differently, particularly if the pair is not Kinfolk. Some septs take the child from its mother to raise it in its new "soul-home," while others adopt both mother and child as honorary Kinfolk. At least one sept has let mother and child return to their ordinary lives, believing that if the child's fate is tied to the caern's, it is best for the child to live out its true destiny. Even such liberal septs, however, generally set a minor spirit or low-ranked Ragabash to keep an occasional eye on the child and check after his well-being.

The circumstances of labor and delivery also hold omens for the caern itself. The most auspicious birth is a healthy and quick one, where a Garou is born to a human or wolf *Maia*. A non-metis Garou born to a Garou (particularly a Black Fury *Maia*) is also considered to be a strong omen for the caern's future. If a Garou mother gives birth to human or wolf Kin children, the caern's greatest promise lies in the distant future, after the child's death. As mentioned above, if a Garou *Maia* is heavy with a metis, the sept of the new caern will need to work hard to receive respect from other Garou. Long, hard labor tends to suggest the influence of the Wyrm near the caern.

If *Maia* dies in giving birth, many Theurges believe that the caern and its Garou will play an important role (for good or ill) in the coming Apocalypse. If the child is stillborn, the rite fails; the death of both *Maia* and child during the ritual is considered to be a profoundly bad omen for Garou participants.

System: As with the Rite of Caern Building, the Mistress of the Rite must make a series of successful Gnosis rolls against a difficulty of 8, and she must achieve a total of 40 successes. She can make this roll twice per hour during *Maia*'s labor, and must succeed before the child is born. For this ritual to succeed, at least ten Garou (one for each moon of pregnancy) must participate, in addition to the Mistress of the Rite, *Maia*, and the Crone who attends her. A botch here deals seven health levels of damage to all involved in the Rite, including *Maia*. However, the Crone attending *Maia* may roll her Gnosis (difficulty 8) to absorb *Maia*'s damage; she can take one wound level onto herself for every success rolled. Unlike the Rite of Caern Building, the Garou present do not have to sacrifice their Gnosis to fuel the new caern; the creation of new life suffices as this spark.

If all goes well with *Maia*, child, and ritual, the new caern has a base Level of 1, with a Gauntlet of 4. Additional successes improve the caern just as with the Rite of Caern Building. Those Garou participating in Bearing the Caern receive Renown as those participating in the Rite of Caern Building; additionally, *Maia*, if a Garou, receives an additional point of each type of Renown (giving her one Wisdom, six Glory, and four Honor Renown).

MET: As with other rites of conception and birth, the roleplay of this rite is more important than the game mechanics. For safety reasons you obviously shouldn't actually try to involve this rite with a player near term; it's sufficient to have a *character* that gives birth in the course of the game.

The rite caster must make a series of static Gnosis challenges. For the sake of drama, these challenges should be made over the course of several hours of play — don't simply stand around fist-slapping for a minute to accumulate all of the challenges at once. Instead, every fifteen minutes or so, a Narrator should quietly make a challenge with the rite mistress. Otherwise, treat this rite like the *Rite of Caern Building*, in **Laws of the**

Wild. The Garou involved don't have to spend any Gnosis to power the rite, but at least ten female Garou must attend. If the rite is interrupted — the rite mistress or *Maia* is injured, for instance — then everyone involved suffers seven health levels of damage, although the attending Crone may expend Gnosis Traits to absorb damage from the *Maia* on a one-for-one basis.

Since it's not fun for your whole group to exclude all of your male troupe members from playing in a multiple-hour rite, you might consider allowing the men among your troupe to stand as guards against the Wyrm-creatures that inevitably arrive for the creation of a new caern, even if they can't participate in the rite directly. Or maybe you have the players all take on the roles of the Wyrm-creatures that the women must defend against....

Mystic Rites

Birth the Fire Warrior

Level Three

In ancient days, legend holds that the goddess Coatlicue faced an angry horde of her own children, who charged her with betraying their father, Mixcoatl, by the hand of a sky-spirit. When all seemed lost, Coatlicue crouched and gave birth to the child of her union with the sky-spirit, the god of fire and war Huitzilopochtli. Huitzilopochtli emerged from the womb full-grown and fully armed; he drove off or slaughtered the mass of his half-siblings in his mother's defense.

With Birth the Fire Warrior, a Mother can mimic Coatlicue's desperate act of incarnation, and give birth to a warrior child spirit to fight on her behalf in times of peril. She must ingest a foul mixture of herbs, hot spices, and spring water, and then calmly and quietly invoke Gaia. The warrior emerges from the Mother's womb as bloodily and messily as one might imagine such a thing — however, the spirit "labor" takes place far faster than would otherwise be the case. The warrior emerges from the Mother's loins in a plume of fire, sword in hand, and proceeds to attack her enemies until it is destroyed or there are no enemies remaining. Birth the Fire Warrior can be used whether the Mother is pregnant with a real child or not, and its emergence generally does not affect a child in the womb.

System: Roll Stamina + Primal-Urge (difficulty 8). Success on this roll indicates that the character will be able to birth the Fire Warrior. This spirit takes ten minutes to emerge from the Fury's womb; successes beyond the first decrease this time by 1 minute each or can be used to improve the Fire Warrior's physical traits at the rate of one attribute point per success. The Fire Warrior will fight unceasingly for the Fury until it is destroyed, there are no enemies remaining, or the scene ends.

The Fire Warrior has the following base game traits: Strength 4, Dexterity 4, Stamina 4, Perception 1, Wits 3. It has Melee 4 and Dodge 3, and an effective Gnosis of 4 and Willpower 10. Its fiery armor gives 3 additional soak dice against all attacks, and does 5 dice of fire damage against any foe that tries to grapple it. Its fiery sword does 8 dice of damage on a successful hit; this damage is considered aggravated against Wyrm creatures and those vulnerable to fire.

MET: You must succeed in a static Physical Challenge, difficulty of nine Traits, with *Primal Urge* for retests. If you succeed, then within ten minutes (although the Spirit Keeper may adjust this time as dramatically appropriate) you "give birth" to a spirit of fire that remains until the end of the scene/hour. The fire warrior has 12 Physical Traits and 8 Mental and Social Traits, *Melee x3*, *Dodge x2*, three levels of armor and inflicts three levels of fire damage on any physical contact.

Python's Trail

Level Four

In the ancient days of Greece, any human who wished to consult the Oracle at Delphi was obliged to pay a tax, the "telono," which gave him the right to approach the great altar of Apollo to offer sacrifices (boars, goats or bulls). Having purified herself in the water of the Kastalian Fountain, Pythia bent over the Navel of the Earth (a cave opening), ate a laurel leaf and, inhaling the vapors emitted from the chasm, entered a state of ecstasy, uttering incoherent words. These were then composed into verses by the Priest, while the interpreter endeavored to render some meaning out of the prophecy.

The Greeks say that Python, a great snake-spirit and Gaia's son, defended the rent in the earth from which oracles could receive visions of the future; they tell of Apollo's great victory against Python and his prophetic works of later days.

Python wasn't truly destroyed, of course; he and his servants walk the tunnels through Gaia's bowels that lead back and forward in history. Loyal and wise Garou can use Python's Trail to walk those same metaphorical tunnels and gain glimpses of the future. Black Furies who use this Rite take on a distant demeanor, and their prophetic utterances obey only dream-logic, not Weaver-think. A second Fury must stand by the Mistress of the Rite while she performs the Rite of Python's Trail, to interpret the nearly mad utterances of her sister.

System: After an hour of trance, roll Perception + Enigmas (target 8). Gaia's dream-tunnels travel throughout history, through a given character's personal past and future as well as all the ages of Gaia. The Mistress of the Rite might well become overwhelmed by the visions before her: she needs three successes to convey anything sensible from the signs she sees — less than three and the character notices only sensations like pain and joy, color, and extremes of sound. Three successes yield poetic or

metaphorical visions of important parts of the character's past or future. Four successes let the Garou explore the timeline of a packmate or loved one; five let her look at the past and future on a larger scale (for her entire pack or tribe, or she may just stare forward to the fires of the Apocalypse). To portray the prophecy correctly, the Priestess must roll Intelligence + Expression, difficulty 8; more successes indicate that more of the Mistress of the Rite's vision is passed on to the pack or sept.

The Storyteller is encouraged to use dream-logic or nightmare-logic to fabricate the character's voyages through the past and future as a result of this Gift. It is intended to allow the Storyteller to grant glimpses and hints of things to come without forcing him to caper his storylines around madly to fit an overly literal interpretation of a character's vision.

MET: You make a static Mental Challenge with *Enigmas*, difficulty of nine Traits. If you succeed, you send your senses outward over the course of the scene/hour into the dream-tunnels of time, twisting through a labyrinth of images. Alert a Narrator before you begin this rite; this will give the Spirit Keeper and Storytellers sufficient time to craft a vision for you. Be warned that visions of this sort follow dream creation and tend to come in symbols or vibrant sensations, not as "video snapshots." While you might direct your vision toward a specific question, the vagaries of dream may carry it in any direction and you may or may not gain the wisdom you seek. Expend an *Expression* Trait to figure out one image or element that hints at things to come.

At the Storyteller's discretion, you may gain one free retest against one foe or challenge later in the story if you successfully deciphered your dream-trance, because you are forewarned. However, you may not stack this retest with other divination-granted bonuses, and you can benefit from no more than one such retest at a time.

Punishment Rites

Avenge the Innocent

Level Four

This is one of the few Garou punishment rites that are generally applied to humans, rather than other Garou. It happens, on occasion, that a human — not *always* a male, despite what some Furies would prefer to believe — commits a serious crime against Gaia and cannot be easily slain. In other cases, the Furies would prefer not to give a violator the honor of a warrior's swift death. To these criminals, the Black Furies assign curses like Avenge the Innocent.

Avenge the Innocent works simply: once the Furies have some core element of the crime that a violator has committed — a bloodied sheet from a violent crime, an accountant's ledger from a con artist's defrauding a community, or a judge's gavel from a painfully biased divorce settlement — they take it as close as they can to the place of the crime. With these two elements in place, they do not need the criminal to be present to pass judgment on him.

System: After a suitably bloody and fiery destruction of the weapon, roll Manipulation + Intimidation (difficulty 7). If they succeed, the Furies invoke the spirit of Hippogriff to rend the criminal's youth away. The subject ages one year per day until his death or until the Furies who cast the curse agree to withdraw it — which most will *not* do for crimes for which restitution cannot be equitably made.

MET: Gather a core element from a criminal's actions and return to the scene of the crime, as described above. The ritemaster must succeed in a static Social challenge with *Intimidation*, difficulty of eight Traits. The criminal then ages rapidly until the casters either remove the curse or the subject dies — every week, assign the victim one *Decrepit* Negative Physical Trait; when these reach the subject's permanent total Physical Traits, the victim dies of old age.

Note that some victims may be guarded against spirits and so cannot be easily affected. Furthermore, the subject must have indeed committed some heinous crime — attempting to cast this rite on an innocent person has no effect and may engender Notoriety for the casters.

Curse on the Household

Level Five

Curse on the Household is a longer-lasting, more serious curse than Avenge the Innocent. As the name implies, the Mistress of the Rite creates a long-lasting curse that cascades down through generations of the criminal's family. This curse is largely left in the hands of the Mistress of the Rite, though there are some restrictions on it (see below). It does not have a set effect. However, for a ritual of this power, it is important that the subject of the rite be physically present for its casting; no doubt he will have to be bound, since no sane person would knowingly allow himself to be cursed in such a fashion. This rite is reserved for the most heinous of criminals against the laws of Gaia: the rapist, the mass-murderer, the incestuous parent, the cannibal.

The Mistress of the Rite chooses four things about the curse: how the curse will pass down the family line, when it takes effect on a particular child, its exact effect, and how the curse may be alleviated: it may pass from parent to all children, and so on down the line; or it may only "infect" the eldest child, or only males (or only females). It usually does not take effect right from birth; it may wait until puberty, or until marriage, or some other simple condition may bring it about. Accordingly, the curse doesn't generally kill its targets outright — if

it did, there would be no future generations to torment. Instead, it makes their lives unpleasant, perhaps eventually unbearable. This could be almost anything: mild schizophrenia; regular bad luck; a plague of ghosts or malevolent minor spirits; inability to hold a regular job; a serious skin condition or non-life-threatening chronic medical condition; or many other things

System: The Fury who performs this ritual must assign a condition to allow its breaking. She *cannot* break the curse on her own, under any circumstances. She must inform the cursed what the condition is, even if he cannot possibly satisfy it. The condition is often implausible on its surface: "Your infant child's sixth daughter must marry a Catholic priest." The condition cannot be impossible, however. Knowledge of the condition does not have to be passed down from parent to child; if the information is lost, the family will be cursed forever.

To perform this rite, the subject must be present; the Mistress of the Rite rolls Intelligence + Expression, difficulty 8. She must achieve 3 successes on this roll; additional successes have no other effect. The Fury's player must write down the precise effects of the rite before the roll takes place; if it fails (that is, achieves 2 or fewer successes), the subject of the curse is free to leave the Fury's presence and that particular curse cannot be used on him in the future. If the roll botches, the Fury who performs the rite has the curse afflicted upon her and her descendants, and the subject of the curse is forever immune to cursing rituals performed by this Fury.

MET: You bring a subject to the place of your rite and cast the *Curse on the Household* over the individual. Specify one condition, which must be achievable, under which the curse can be broken, and make a static Mental Challenge using *Expression* with a difficulty of nine Traits. If you succeed, you give the subject the equivalent of four Traits of Flaws of your choice. You must inform the subject of how the curse can be broken. From that time forward, the subject and all lineal descendants suffer the exact curse and Flaws that you specify.

Seasonal Rites

Autumn: Rejuvenate the Soil

Level One

In the earliest days of agriculture, and even before the advent of agriculture, when humans hunted for meat and gathered fruits and vegetables as they could, they were fully aware that spending too long in one place would leach the life from the soil. When tending to herds of mortals still mattered to the Black Furies, they taught their charges the ways of the Earth Mother; Rejuvenate the Soil is one of those secrets.

The planter takes a pound of seeds from the choicest crop produced or gathered this year, and burns that mass in a bronze bowl while murmuring prayers to Gaia in her guise as Demeter. She must insure that no ashes or cinders leave the fire, lest the ritual lose its efficacy. When the fire is complete, the Fury mixes in a few drops of her own blood. Using a labrys, the Fury next carves a glyph of fertility — at least three feet across, and preferably larger — into the soil at the center of the area to be affected. She then smears or pours the blood-ash mixture into the glyph. An area radiating out from the glyph will regain some of its bounty over the winter.

System: The player should roll Stamina + Survival, difficulty 6 (unless the area is a former blight, in which case it must be ritually cleansed and even then the difficulty is 7 the first year). Every success yields an acre of improved cropland for the next year.

MET: Make a static Physical Challenge with *Survival*, difficulty of seven Traits (or eight, for an area that has suffered from blight, famine or other disasters). If you succeed, the area will benefit from improved crop production over the next year — generally, a result suitable for roleplay, but the Storyteller might rule that this can yield a tangible benefit in the form of temporarily improved *Resources* or *Influence* if it might affect your character's income.

Age Role Rites

The following rites can only be used by Garou in the appropriate age roles: Maiden Rites can only be used before the gestation of the Fury's first child — even if, technically, she is no longer a maiden (see the "Motherhood" section in Chapter Two for further discussion of this). Mother Rites can be used from the birth of the first child until the Fury can no longer bear children (due to menopause or injury); Crone Rites can only be used after that point.

Maiden Rites

Rite of Pure Breeding

Level Two

The mysteries of breeding and reproduction can never be wholly eliminated. Gaia gives members of many species tools to discern good mates, and to attract them: cues from symmetry and obvious health to more subtle things, like pheromones, give animals an idea of which mate would be the best for them. In the dying days before the Apocalypse, however, the Black Furies use magic to help them discern the best possible mates; after all, time is short, and wasting time breeding with a male whose bloodline is weak is no longer acceptable. Through the Rite of Pure Breeding, a Black Fury can determine if a particular mate will help her produce Garou or strong-blooded Kinfolk children.

To test a male, the Fury must acquire something meaningful to him, or part of his body (no, not a finger,

unless she's of the Amazons of Diana and he's *really* patient — hair or fingernail clippings do just fine). The ritual requires a droplet of the Fury's blood, smeared on the stolen thing. She then breaks it (or cuts it, if too small to easily break) over a white sheet and views the pattern created by the bloodstains. Symmetrical or circular patterns mean that the male would be a good mate and more likely to produce Garou children. Wilder, angular patterns suggest a worse match.

System: Adjudication of this rite is best done at the Storyteller's whim, but if the player insists on mechanics, Perception + Occult can be rolled, with a difficulty of 8 to properly interpret the omens.

MET: As noted for the tabletop version of the *Rite of Pure Breeding*, this rite is best used at the discretion of the Storyteller, but a successful static Mental Challenge with *Occult* (difficulty of nine Traits) may help to discern whether a given male has many traits that will breed well.

Mother Rites

Free the Wayward Child

Level One

This rite, a simple one, frees a male Garou child of a Black Fury from any spiritual ties to Pegasus and the Black Furies. It is a quick, emotional rite; the mother traces the Black Fury glyph on her son's forehead in tears, and then blows on the boy's forehead until the glyph dries up. This rite's popularity is relatively new as such things go; in the ancient days, a male child was often simply left out to die of exposure.

System: There are no game mechanics involved with this rite; it simply acknowledges that the child is unmarked by any Fury blood and free to become a full member of whatever tribe will adopt him.

MET: Same thing. No mechanics necessary.

Crone Rites

Curse of the Crone

Level Two

Curse of the Crone is reserved for philanderers; rapists deserve vengeance, not the mockery and numbness this rite creates. This rite renders a male target infertile and impotent, physically causing his member to shrivel into near-uselessness.

System: The rite requires something distinctly male about the target — this can be nearly anything from a dirty undershirt to a drop of his semen. This physical element is torn and scattered, while the Crone quietly murmurs an incantation to Gaia. Roll Charisma + Primal-Urge against a target of 6; every success indicates a week of duration for Curse of the Crone's effects. The Crone can undo her own curse with the snap of a twig and a magic word — if she so chooses.

MET: You must secure and destroy some article of your subject, which must have some tie to his masculinity. Make a static Social Challenge, difficulty seven; for each Trait of *Primal Urge* that you expend, the subject suffers from impotence for a week. This affects only men, of course. You may end this rite at your whim, as noted for the tabletop version.

Find the Scythe

Level Three

Crones are traditionally associated with learning and teaching, and also with the end of life. These two aspects both feed Find the Scythe, which allows a Crone to determine the means by which a given Garou will meet her end. This ritual does not work on humans. Find the Scythe can be performed on a willing or unwilling subject, but the subject must be present for the ritual to work properly.

System: The Crone must inspect the Garou from all angles; to accomplish this, she walks clockwise around the stationary subject while looking across her right shoulder at him. When this is complete, she inspects the top of his head, and the lines on the bottom of his feet. After half an hour of meditation on all that she has seen roll Perception + Enigmas (difficulty 9 if the subject is a Maiden by Fury standards — regardless of her tribe — or 8 if she is a Mother, or 7 if a Crone). If successful, the Crone will be able to describe the manner of death that will befall this Garou. A failure results in a vision that is incorrect in one important detail (the character's killer uses a gun, not a klaive, for instance); a botch indicates a vision that is wildly inaccurate, preferably a vision that will unnerve the subject as much as possible.

The Storyteller is free to describe this vision in whatever means he sees fit, and the Fury is equally free to pass the vision off in her own manner. The vision is occasionally metaphorical, though it is often quite literal. However, it is generally somewhat impressionistic; for instance, it might be obvious that a black-furred werewolf will rip the character's heart out, but that werewolf's identity will be unclear.

Find the Scythe is a dangerous rite, because it seems to ferret out the absolute truth of a future event. No amount of wheeling and dealing with the spirit world will alter the death shown through Find the Scythe. This may cause Storytellers some headaches, and they are encouraged to think quickly on their feet to cope with the results of Find the Scythe. Remember, Storytellers, vagueness can be a virtue.

MET: The Crone casting the rite walks clockwise around the subject and examines her carefully, then spends a half-hour out of play contemplating the various signs read. Once completed, make a static Mental Challenge, difficulty of ten Traits (using *Enigmas* for retests).

If the caster succeeds, then she manages to discern one important portent of the subject's death and how it will occur. If she *fails*, then she describes an incorrect image. It's recommended that the Storyteller involved in the rite decide on whether to counter with rock, scissors or paper beforehand and let the player throw without knowing the outcome. The vision engendered is the literal fate of the subject, and will come to pass eventually — make a note of it on the character's record.

Totems

Totems of Respect

The Muses

Background Cost: 5

Some Fury packs follow the path of the Art Spirits, who carry with them creativity, skill, and wisdom. The Muses — there are nine — collectively choose a pack, passing their blessings to the most worthy Furies. The Muses are not responsible for the sacred creative impulse. They teach the craft and form of their arts, but they cannot engender the act of creation. That is reserved for mortals alone, be they human or Garou. In the ancient days, it is said, the Muses were separate totem spirits, each responsible for their own small group of packs, but on the cusp of the Apocalypse, there are not enough Fury packs dedicated to the arts and learning for them to do so.

Traits: Muse pack members each gain one permanent point to the Social Attribute of their choice and one point in Performance, Expression, or Enigmas. Each pack member will have a particular Muse to whom she is closest, based on the art form that she prefers. Calliope favors heroic and epic poets (Expression); Clio favors historians (Enigmas); Erato favors those who compose erotic and love poetry (Expression); Euterpe favors those who perform instrumental music (Performance); Melpomene favors tragic theater (Performance); Polymnia favors the poets of the sacred (Expression); Terpischore favors song and dance (Performance); Thalia favors comic theater (Performance); and Urania favors astronomy (Enigmas).

Ban: Muse packs must devote their lives to art and learning. They also must work to defend free speech and freedom of expression.

MET: The Muses grant their pack members one extra Social Trait and one Trait of either *Performance*, *Expression* or *Enigmas* Ability.

Totems of War

The Gorgons

"The Medusae," as a single Totem, no longer exist. Due to circumstances that are not clear even to the Furies' eldest Theurges, Medusa herself has fallen away from her

sisters; all five now exist as independent Totem spirits. Packs previously dedicated to the Medusae should pick a new totem from among the five Gorgons (listed individually below). This is an out-of-character decision, as the Gorgons themselves select their own packs in this time of turmoil. Players may cede this decision to the Storyteller, of course. According to the historian in Chapter 1, no known pack formerly dedicated to the Medusae as a group has been adopted by Medusa herself; however, there is no reason that, Storyteller willing, your pack cannot be the first.

Euryale

Background Cost: 4

Euryale, also called the Far Springer, is the eldest of the Five Daughters. She often serves as the matron spirit to packs of Amazons of Diana; she sympathizes with their general feeling that Man is the weaker sex, and deserves to be subjugated by Woman. Despite her role as older sister, Euryale is a New Moon. She encourages Furies and female packs to deliberately violate social conventions imposed by patriarchal society whenever they can; Euryale can almost be heard cheering when a human woman walks down a New York street topless, or when a lesbian couple adopts a child.

Traits: Packs devoted to Euryale receive the Gifts: Fatal Flaw and Leap of the Kangaroo, and +3 dice when using Intimidation on males.

Ban: Packs of Euryale can never contain male members, and will only subject themselves to a male sept official if he defeats the pack's alpha in an open challenge.

MET: Euryale grants her pack members the Gifts: *Fatal Flaw* and *Leap of the Kangaroo*, and a three-Trait bonus on *Intimidation* challenge resolution against males.

Helena

Background Cost: 4

Helena, the Crescent Moon of the First Daughters, holds a great deal more respect for Man than her older sister Euryale does. She knows that both sexes are equally parts of Gaia, and it is simply the misguidance of the Patriarch that leads Man astray. Packs devoted to Helena probably tend to err on the side of harshness when it comes to females' weakness; Helena's daughters, for instance, are sure to hold a mother partially culpable if her husband is abusing their children. However, they are sure to ferret out the truth of such a situation, and come down most harshly on the more serious offender of the couple, regardless of gender.

Traits: Helena's packs receive the Gift: Name the Spirit, +1 to Charisma and +3 dice to Investigation dice pools. Each pack member gains one temporary Wisdom Renown.

Ban: Helena's packs must contain an equal number of male and female Garou. If there is an odd number in the pack, the odd Garou can be of either gender (if the pack has seven members, there can be 4 male and 3 female, or 4 female and 3 male, but not 5 and 2 in either direction). The males can be Fury metis or members of other tribes, if Helena accepts them.

MET: Helena's packs gain the Gift: *Name the Spirit*, a bonus Social Trait *Charismatic*, one extra Wisdom Renown Trait and a three-Trait bonus to the resolution of all *Investigation* challenges.

Isthmene

Background Cost: 5

Isthmene the Axe-Maiden is the youngest and most beautiful of the Gorgons; she is also the most fierce in battle. She wields a labrys of pure silver, and encourages her daughters to wield a labrys as their primary weapon. Despite her kindly appearance, Isthmene brooked no insult or back-talk from any man while she walked the Realm, and she does not handle rebukes from her older sisters much better. Garou legends have it that whole forests were felled in ancient days as Isthmene worked off her Rage at her older sisters' condescending ways.

Traits: Each member of one of Isthmene's packs receives one Glory Renown, +2 dice to their Melee dice pools when wielding a labrys, and +1 Rage. They cannot enter Fox frenzies; when they do frenzy, it is always a frenzy of bloodlust.

Ban: Isthmene's daughters will not tolerate any abuse from a male of any species, and they pay back such abuse in disproportionate fashion: insults are repaid with bruises; bruises with claw and tooth.

MET: Isthmene's packs gain one Glory Renown Trait, a two-Trait bonus to resolution of all combat challenges when wielding a labrys and one additional Rage Trait. They only enter berserk frenzies, never fox frenzies.

Medusa

Background Cost: 4

Medusa is older only than Isthmene, and her Rage is no less frightening to behold. Medusa's hatred of Man is only exceeded by Isthmene's; it is said that she howled a song of rage when Pegasus adopted the first male metis of the Black Fury tribe, and that she abandoned her sisters for several years after that. Medusa, known by the poet Hesiod as "The Queen," was a Galliard in life, and her songs remain beautiful; many of them serve as battlefield Rites on their own.

Medusa has once again left her sisters; whether willingly — due to a dispute with Helena or another — or as a result of battle with Wyrm- or Weaver-creatures is unknown. While most Furies assume that Medusa has no packs to call her own, the truth is that perhaps one or two packs have heard her distant calls, and receive some inspiration from their faraway mother.

Traits: Medusa's daughters receive the Gift: Inspiration, +3 to dice pools involving Crafts, and +1 Honor Renown.

Ban: Medusa's packs may contain neither members of tribes other than Black Furies, nor even male Fury metis; they even refuse to consort with such creatures at caerns when possible.

MET: Medusa's packs gain the Gift: *Inspiration*, a three-Trait bonus to all *Craft* challenge resolutions and an extra Trait of Honor Renown.

Stheno

Background Cost: 4

Stheno, called "the Mighty" by Hesiod, is the middle daughter, and as such serves as peacemaker among her sisters. Most often, to her chagrin, this involves standing to defend Helena against the other three, despite her own feelings toward Man. Stheno is as wise as she is strong; she rarely comes to any conclusion without proper deliberation, but her snap judgments are likely to be the correct ones nevertheless. Stheno seems to be terribly concerned about Medusa's disappearance, and has assigned her daughters to seek out Medusa herself or any packs or minor spirits that serve her.

Traits: Members of packs devoted to Stheno receive one temporary Wisdom Renown, and the Gift: Strength of Purpose. The pack also gains an additional die of both Strength and Stamina to be apportioned in the usual way.

Ban: Daughters of Stheno must accede to any request to stand as arbiters, particularly in conflicts between men and women. They must endeavor to learn the truth of these conflicts before rendering judgment.

Medusa's Disappearance

The mystery of Medusa's disappearance is deliberately left to the Storyteller. She will eventually return to the greater spirit world, and packs will follow her as they follow her sisters, but the nature, cause, and duration of her disappearance aren't likely to be a major part of the "greater storyline" of **Werewolf**, whatever that is. Some possibilities:

Pegasus may have had something to do with the birth of the "Perfect Metis," and Medusa has once again left Pegasus's brood to consider her future with them.

An argument between Medusa and Isthmene erupted into full-fledged fighting; Medusa left the scene of the battle because she did not wish to fly into a frenzy and slay her sister.

Medusa is somehow involved with the arrival of Anthelios, the Red Star. For a darker chronicle, perhaps Medusa has been swayed to the side of the Wyrm.

MET: Stheno's packs gain one Trait of Wisdom Renown, the Gift: *Strength of Purpose* and the bonus Physical Traits of *Stalwart* and *Resilient*.

Panther

Background Cost: 5

Panther is a rare totem for Garou, given the bad blood after the War of Rage and subsequent cascades of anger. Panther guides a few packs of Freebooters, Bacchantes, and Amazons, but has not taken a new pack of Garou cubs on in several years; surely any pack she was to take on would have to be exceptional in the traits that Panther favors: grace, speed, and cunning.

Traits: Panther gives her children the Gift: Eyes of the Cat, and reduces the difficulties of all rolls involving stealth, grace, or balance by two. Many Red Talons and Get of Fenris despise followers of Panther, primarily due to their distrust of the Bastet. The Bastet consider Panther packs kindred spirits and may call on their sisters in time of need; in particularly rare circumstances they may come to a Panther pack's assistance.

Ban: Panther packs must aid felines in distress — be they housecats stuck in trees or Bastet beset by Wyrm-creatures. Panther packs must also spend at least one month a year in the Amazon, despite the great risk; things have gotten very dire there. Panther no longer asks her packs to gather gossip for her, having more important things to worry about.

MET: Panther's packs gain the Gift: *Eyes of the Cat* and gain a two-Trait bonus on challenge resolutions of all stealth, grace or balance-related actions.

Totems of Wisdom

Themis, the Dream-Weaver

Background Cost: 6

Themis is the ancient Greek goddess of justice; she is seen in the traditional image of justice as a blindfolded woman holding scales. A pack of Furies dedicated to Themis built the temple of the oracle at Delphi, though it was later taken from them. As the child of both earth and sky gods, she strode between the old chthonic ways of Gaia and those of Man. She was able to keep this balance for eons, until the balance of the Triat shifted. As it did so, Themis slipped between Wyld and Weaver. Her present Realm is an Umbral sphere near the dreamlands; aid and advice from Themis come only through dreams, a trait that has given her the epithet "Dream-Weaver."

Packs serving Themis are constantly on the prowl in search of injustice. They observe and meditate on the balance of the Tellurian when they can, but for the most part they follow their mistress's guidance to sources of great injustice. Themis is an old spirit; Priestesses of Artemis and more traditional Amazons often follow her.

Traits: Children of Themis gain a permanent point of Wisdom Renown, and add one to their Enigmas and Gnosis traits. Galliards of Themis gain the Gift: Dreamspeak, and all of her children receive prophetic visions of the Storyteller's devising from time to time — the meaning of which will not be obvious. Players should interpret the dreams through roleplaying, rather than making an Enigmas roll.

Ban: Themis will never choose Glass Walkers nor allow her children to learn a Glass Walker-only tribal Gift (for instance, a child of Themis could learn Attunement, since that Gift is shared with the Bone Gnawers, but could not learn Control Simple Machine). Too much of the Weaver exists in these things.

MET: Themis' packs gain one Trait of Wisdom Renown, one Gnosis Trait and one extra *Enigmas* Ability. Galliard followers of Themis also gain the Gift: *Dreamspeak*.

Fetishes

Labrys (Non-fetish)

The "standard" labrys is a double-headed axe meant to be wielded with two hands in Homid form; Garou can wield a labrys in one hand if her Strength reaches 6. A Garou can wield a labrys in *each* hand if her Strength reaches 8 (attacking in such a fashion uses the standard rules for multiple attacks — the player must split the character's dice pool or use Rage for extra actions — but a Crinos Fury successfully wielding twin labryses is a terrifying sight, worthy of an extra +2 dice on Intimidate rolls). The weapon does Strength + 4 lethal damage and is an important component of some rites. Labryses are most often enchanted to act as fetishes in addition to their core usefulness as weapons; this is done as much to honor the weapon as to aid the wielder. They are considered to be the tribal weapon of the Black Furies tribe; most Furies are able to accept a female labrys-wielder from another tribe, but few react kindly to the sight of a male Garou using a labrys.

MET: A labrys has three bonus Traits, the negative Traits of *Clumsy* and *Heavy*, and inflicts three health levels of damage in combat. An individual may wield a labrys in one hand with ten or more Physical Traits, and a pair of them with fourteen or more Physical Traits.

Fertility Charms

Level 1, Gnosis 2

Many different sorts of fertility charms exist; the labrys itself is considered to be a fertility symbol by many. Others include a stylized woman's body, such as the Venus of Willendorf; catseyes or simply stone or wooden cat pendants; eggs; frogs; the lotus; and many others. Furies bind spirits of particularly fertile animals (rabbits, cats, frogs) into these charms and in so doing create a spot of magic that increases a woman's chance of conceiving healthy young. Fertility charms work just as well on a female Garou or wolf as they do on a human, though they do not improve the mother's chance of conceiving a Garou child. And of course, none of them work on metis. Some more powerful versions of these charms also improve the mother's health through the pregnancy, increasing her chances of surviving it and living to raise her child. Garou rarely need such assistance, and modern medicine does a moderately good job of caring for humans, so these sorts of charms are slowly disappearing. Fertility charms have no game effect; the results of sexual encounters are better left in the hands of the Storyteller than a roll of the dice.

MET: As noted above, the effects of *Fertility Charms* are best left in the hands of the Storyteller's discretion.

Quiver of Silvered Arrows

Level 2, Gnosis 3

Most of these tools were originally forged during the longago days of open conflict with other tribes; the Shadow Lords and Get of Fenris were particularly anathema to the Furies back then, and were on the receiving end of more of these arrows than other tribes were. There are two enchantments on these arrows: first, they are sharper than typical arrowheads, and second, they do not break under ordinary use. That is to say, a Fury can shoot a silvered arrow at a Wyrm-thing, miss, and have the arrow strike a stone wall or the side of a tank, and it will not break. However, if she were to attempt to use the arrow as a melee weapon, climbing piton, or toothpick, she would risk breaking it.

A quiver holds a dozen arrows, but counts as just one fetish for the purposes of binding. The arrows themselves do an additional die of damage (thus, 5 for shortbows and 6 for longbows), and that damage is silver, unsoakable by Garou without special Gifts or armor. These fetishes typically contain Lunes.

MET: A quiver of silvered arrows inflicts silver damage, as might be expected. The fetish version here scores an extra health level of damage if the archer wins or ties a subsequent Simple Test after hitting, and will never break when fired.

Cavern Torc

Level 3, Gnosis 3

The wearer of a Cavern Torc is blessed when traveling beneath Gaia's surface and exploring her womb; cave systems become safe harbors for her. When the Cavern Torc is worn, the Garou can see in pitch-blackness as well as she could on a cloudy day. In

ways, she can see even farther; her senses extend about twenty meters in all directions, while underground. She can sense foes hidden around the bend in a tunnel, or see through a minor cave-in. The torc even works when beneath the earth in modern structures; should a Garou wearing it penetrate the basement of a Wyrm-infested skyscraper, she will benefit from its abilities there. The Cavern Torc only fails if the Gauntlet rises to 9 or above. These fetishes are created with the help of various cavern spirits, such as bat-spirits, mole-spirits or earth elementals.

MET: The wearer of an active *Cavern Torc* never suffers darkness penalties and cannot be surprised by anything within twenty paces so long as the local Gauntlet is below nine.

Coin Reader

Level 3, Gnosis 3

The Sisterhood first developed fetishes of this nature as early as the sixteenth century; the fetish tracks money backward, to see who owned it previously. Early versions of this fetish are pairs of scales with a quill pen and inkwell; a coin is placed on one side of the scales and the pen leaps up and writes the names of the last seven people who touched it. More modern versions of the fetish have a small platter and a receipt-style printer, but the effect is the same — and note that all versions of these fetishes can track paper money as easily as they do coinage. Electronic transfers, being purely in the realm of the Weaver, cannot be tracked with this fetish. This fetish was first created when a Sisterhood pack found itself to be receiving a great deal of Wyrm-tainted coinage; they had no easy way to track the money backward, and found that they inadvertently intimidated shopkeepers they interrogated. Certain Gifts and Wyrm-powers can conceal past owners' identities.

Rumors abound of a version of this fetish that continues to track coins for a few days after they leave the fetish; they write out names as the coin goes from owner to owner for a week or so. Such a fetish would surely have a higher Gnosis requirement than that of an "ordinary" coin reader. These fetishes are crafted by binding spirits of avarice.

MET: Because of the difficulty of tracking every piece of immaterial money that passes through characters' hands, this fetish should be used between games when you wish to gather information about someone's *Resources* or *Influence*. You can learn how they gain their money (by checking up on who's paying them) or who they're spending it on, *so long as you can acquire a sample of the money*. Doing so may require you to roleplay somehow coming into possession of the subject's money, either by theft or guile.

Bow of Artemis

Level 3, Gnosis 5

A Bow of Artemis is usable only by a Maiden Black Fury. It is the perfect hunting bow, giving its wielder +4 dice to her Survival dice pools when using it to hunt for food. In battle, it grants its wielder +2 dice to her Archery dice pool, and causes those arrows that strike their targets to do two extra dice of lethal damage. The bow is crafted by binding any spirit of Pegasus' brood within.

MET: A *Bow of Artemis* inflicts one extra health level of damage with any arrow fired; it grants an extra two bonus Traits to its wielder (although this is only a single Trait if the archer does not have *Archery* or *Athletics* Ability); and it adds a whopping four Trait bonus to resolution of all *Survival* challenges of bow hunting. These modifiers stack with magical ammunition — beware the Fury with Bane or Silvered Arrows.

Labrys (Fetish)

Level 3, Gnosis 7

A fetish labrys is much like the standard double-headed axe of the same name (see above). However, thanks to the war-spirit bound within, it inflicts aggravated damage, not lethal.

Pandora's Box

Level 3, Gnosis 6

In ancient myth, Pandora had a box full of the ills of mankind; as she was unstoppably curious, she did open it and they were released to hassle humanity for all time. This fetish is ironically named for that woman, though it can be used both to trap and release Banes — the ills of mankind embodied. The Box can hold up to ten Wyrm-spirits at a time.

To trap a spirit, the Fury bound to the Box must point its keyhole at the spirit and speak a command word in ancient Greek. The box then rolls its Gnosis in a contest against the spirit's current Rage; the target is 6 for both Box and Bane. If the Box gets more successes, the Bane is trapped; if the Bane gets as many or more successes, it is free and Pandora's Box cannot be used on it again that day.

If, for some reason, the Fury wishes to let one or more Banes free, she needs only to open the lid of Pandora's Box. She must make a Wits roll and achieve 3 successes in order to release just one Bane; fewer than 3 successes means that extra Banes escape, one per success. A botch on this roll frees all the Banes in the box. If she gets the 3 successes, the one Bane that escapes will be the one that has been in the Box for longest.

This fetish is made by binding any spirit with entrapment powers within; usually spider-spirits or spirits of crafts are preferred.

MET: Make a challenge pitting the Box (six Gnosis Traits) against the target Bane's Gnosis Traits. If the Box wins, it immediately sucks in the target Bane and traps it. If it fails, the Box cannot function again on that Bane for the rest of the day.

Releasing a Bane requires a static Mental Challenge from the Box's owner, with a difficulty of seven Traits. Success allows the holder to free the one Bane that has resided in the Box longest. Otherwise, *all* of the Banes escape.

Labrys of Isthmene

Level 4, Gnosis 7

The Labrys of Isthmene is not a unique item; instead, it is a general name for any fetish labrys dedicated to Isthmene, the Gorgon of battle. The most common variety of this fetish inflicts its Strength + 4 dice of damage as aggravated wounds rather than lethal, and allows the wielder to channel the Gift: Spirit of the Fray by spending Gnosis just as if she knew that Gift. A Labrys of Isthmene cannot be used by a male Garou of any tribe; it takes an extra point of Gnosis for a female of a tribe other than the Black Furies to attune to it.

MET: An attuned labrys of Isthmene, usable only by a woman, inflicts aggravated damage instead of lethal damage and allows its holder to invoke the Gift: *Spirit of the Fray*. As noted previously, attuning such a weapon requires an extra Gnosis Trait from a non-Fury female.

Lash of the Furies

Level 4, Gnosis 8

These whips are ancient barbed cats o' nine tails. They are alleged to have been cut from the intestines of a great Wyrm-creature, though some suggest that it might have been the Nemean Lion. This is only likely because the Lion was emphatically a chthonic creature of earth defeated by the male god Heracles, and using its innards as a pain fetish suits the ironic nature of a Fury Crone. These whips are used for punishment or even torture, not combat. A hit from one of the Lashes — only five exist — does Strength +3 aggravated damage, with a soak difficulty of 9. Wounds from the Lash leave permanent scars; Furies can make a Perception + Occult roll, difficulty 8 to attempt to recognize the distinctive scars the Lash makes — two successes are necessary for this.

Spirits inside the Lash ferret out the target's guilty secrets on a successful hit, and relay this information to the Fury using the whip unless the target rolls more Willpower successes (at a difficulty of 9) than he took wound levels. The Lash of the Furies is not solely used on Wyrm-creatures; it has been used on intransigent Garou of other tribes, but those Garou are rarely allowed to return alive to their tribemates. It is known that Kelonoke Wildhair

has a Lash of the Furies in her possession, and that its tender caresses are the least of the agonies that a male Garou who sets foot near the Furies' home caern will feel.

MET: A *Lash of the Furies* inflicts two levels of aggravated damage, but it has no bonus Traits. However, since a victim is typically being tortured and unable to resist, this is hardly a hindrance. Each time the *Lash* strikes, the victim must win (not tie) a Simple Test or expend a Trait of Willpower; failure means that one guilty secret is transmitted empathically to the lash wielder.

Bronze Labrys

Level 5, Gnosis 7

The oldest weapons of the Black Furies stem from the tribe's Golden Age, in Athens during the days after the Trojan War. During that time, they acted as arbiters of justice within the city, to the dismay of lawbreakers throughout Athens. A few fetishes remain with the tribe from those ancient days; accordingly, they are fashioned out of bronze, as were most weapons and armor of the day. The Bronze Labrys is intended as a sample fetish of this sort; Storytellers and players are encouraged to create their own ancient fetish weapon to fit their chronicle's backstory.

The Bronze Labrys does Strength + 5 dice of aggravated damage; additionally, it moves under the influence of the Gorgons' spirit invested into it, and gives its wielder a free Block maneuver each turn of combat, at no multi-action penalty. The Bronze Labrys can store up to five points of Gnosis, which its wielder may tap as a free action, to use as she sees fit; she can also invest her own Gnosis into the Bronze Labrys to replenish energy that she has spent. Lastly, once per day the Fury wielding the Bronze Labrys may use it to cut through up to a three-foot depth of almost *any* inanimate substance; doing so, she can dig a human-sized hole.

MET: A *Bronze Labrys* functions in combat like a normal labrys, except that it inflicts aggravated damage and it gives the wielder one free defensive retest per combat turn. The *Bronze Labrys* holds up to five Traits of Gnosis and may be used or replenished at will by the wielder. Once per day the *Bronze Labrys* may excavate a hole of three-foot depth in any inanimate surface except the most powerfully enchanted hardened materials.

Merits and Flaws

Merits and Flaws are an *optional* rule introduced in the Werewolf Players Guide; they allow a player to add various rules benefits and drawbacks to his character by paying extra freebie points (or receiving more freebies for taking Flaws). If the Storyteller allows Merits and Flaws in his game, the following should prove particularly appropriate for Black Fury characters. At the Storyteller's discretion, Garou characters

of any tribe can take many of them; however, of course, the Storyteller's word in this matter is, as always, law.

Unusually Fertile (1 point Merit)

The character with this merit is far more likely to become a parent than another Garou is. While Garou are not substantially less fertile than humans are, a Garou with Unusually Fertile is twice as likely as an average human to either become pregnant or cause a pregnancy after a single unprotected sexual encounter. The children of a character with this Merit are no more likely to be Garou than are the children of another character not so blessed. The specific effects of the Merit are best left to the Storyteller and player involved, especially if the character is female. For obvious reasons, metis may not take this Merit.

MET: As noted in the tabletop text, your character is unusually fertile, but the impact of this upon game play is a matter for Storyteller discretion, not for challenges and Traits.

Caern Child (5 point Merit)

A Garou character with the Merit: Caern Child was born during a Rite of Bearing the Caern (see p. 75). This birth alone is considered to be a very strong positive omen; the character receives +1 die on all Social rolls when dealing with Garou of her home sept. Additionally, the totem spirits of the caern to which the character was born pay special attention to her; she receives 1 point in the Totem background for free, so long as her pack's totem is one of the sept's totem spirits.

This background does bring negative attention to the character as well. Should she fail in any task the Theurges and Galliards of her home sept are likely to wail and gnash their teeth, as the character's fate is said to be linked to that of the caern. The character may receive a mentor or two that she didn't seek out or ask for, due to the sept's need to keep her safe and strong. She is certain to receive unwelcome attention from the local Wyrm population, who believe — probably quite rightly — that the first step to corrupting the new caern is to force the character down the Black Spiral, corrupting her rather than killing her outright.

MET: You gain a one-Trait bonus to all Social Challenges involving Garou of your home sept — the caern to which you're tied. You gain one free Trait in the *Totem* Background, as well. The health of your home caern is probably tied to your fortunes; while this is a subject for the Storyteller to interpret, it does mean that your sept-mates probably go out of the way to help and advise you, so as to insure your health and, by extension, your caern's continued prosperity. Be warned, as unwelcome "advice" and intervention from Wyrm foes may seek to guide or direct you in order to influence your caern.

Camp Affinity/Enmity (2 point Merit/Flaw)

Camp Affinity indicates that a particular camp of Black Furies has a particular fondness toward you. Perhaps you did them a great favor, or perhaps they are trying to sway you to join their group. Regardless, you have a -1 difficulty on Social rolls when interacting with that camp. You should not be a member of this camp when you first take this merit, although you can shift into that camp during play as the chronicle permits.

Camp Enmity indicates that a particular camp of Black Furies has it in for you. This works best when the character is a member of a particular camp to which the other camp already has some opposition, like the Sisterhood and the Order of Our Merciful Mother, or the Bacchantes and the Amazons of Diana. Or perhaps you're not in a given camp, but you have done something to give offense to one. No matter the cause, this Flaw gives you a +1 difficulty on Social rolls when interacting with that camp.

MET: As a Merit, you gain a one-Trait bonus to Social Challenge resolution with members of the camp in question; as a Flaw, this is a penalty Trait instead. In either case, you should also briefly inform camp members of this Trait so as to appropriately influence subsequent role-playing. Note that this bonus or penalty Trait can exceed your usual Trait maximum or minimum.

Infertile (1 or 3 point Flaw)

Your character is infertile, for whatever reason; perhaps she contracted a virulent disease as a youth, suffered from battle scars to the abdomen, or was the victim of a botched abortion before her First Change. She cannot bear any children. This is the cause of some lowering of status within the Black Furies; she loses 1 point of Honor Renown. If the character has never borne any children, then she will be considered a Maiden until such time as she goes through menopause and becomes a Crone — this is the 3-point version of the Flaw. She cannot learn any Mother Gifts or rites. If the character has had children, and simply can have no more, this is only a 1-point Flaw. At the Storyteller's option, depending on the traditions of the sept, the latter version of this Flaw may lead to the character's being considered a Crone.

MET: Lose one Trait of Honor Renown: Your character can never have children, except through the intervention of magical assistance (which may require you to spend experience points to remove this Flaw). For one Trait, you have had children but cannot have more, and are probably considered a Crone. For three Traits, you have not and never will have children; you will be a Maiden until you enter the Crone age. You will also tend to suffer from varying levels of pity and scorn from other Black Furies, especially Mothers.

Chapter Four: Sisters, Mothers and Grandmothers

There is no animal more invincible than a woman, nor fire either, nor any wildcat so ruthless.
— Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

Some Garou look on the Black Furies as something less than a tribe — they see only the "no males" law, and presume they're dealing with a sorority. This is a horrible, and ultimately rather human, mistake. The Furies are bound not by their "rejection of males" (a ridiculous concept, considering how many Furies have beloved brothers, husbands and children), but by ties of society, blood and mysticism. Their bloodlines and oaths before Pegasus have kept them bound through terrible trials that would have splintered any group founded on nothing more than a simple philosophy of sexism. This is, sadly enough, often a major stumbling block when the Furies recruit the disgruntled females of other tribes; such renunciates often fail to consider that their new tribemates aren't necessarily of the same mind as their new inductee. They find out all too quickly that the Furies are a tribe like all the others, for better *and* for worse.

Still, there *is* some truth to the word "sisterhood"; two Black Furies of the same general age and rank will indeed consider one another sisters. Like any two sisters, they may love each other, be indifferent to one another, or hate each other bitterly — but they're still sisters, not acquaintances. Some Furies find that their bonds with their tribal sisters, mothers and aunts are far superior to any ties they might have had with their blood relations. Others find their relationship with their tribe doesn't quite replace their bonds with their closest relatives — but that it gives them something new to believe in. And, of course, some Furies are related to certain tribemates by blood *and* tribal bond, reinforcing the "tribe as family" mindset all the more.

The following Black Furies are a selection of raw cubs that have yet to make their mark on the world and tribal legends that have already done so. The former can be used as pregenerated player characters for an off-the-cuff game, for introducing new players, or even as simple extras; the latter might make guest appearances as contacts, ancestor-spirits or in other roles. Their motivations, strengths and weaknesses may vary widely, but in each one's breast burns the heart of a Fury.

Omega Female

Quote: *I don't understand. Why shouldn't I submit to him? Doesn't he outrank me?*

Prelude: All the others could tell you were different from the time your eyes were open. Unfortunately, they didn't take it very well. Your parents favored your littermates over you, and the rest of the pack followed suit. You spent many of your days as a cub hungry, never given any food until the others had eaten, and sometimes punished for trying to sneak a little extra. It wasn't much fun, but you accepted it as your lot. After all, someone had to be the omega.

Your First Change came when the beta female, fresh from challenging the alpha female's authority and still smarting from the loss, tried to make herself feel better by making you miserable. Although your wolf instinct told you not to resist, the abuse woke a deeper instinct, one you'd never felt before. You killed her before you knew what you were doing. Horrified, confused and ashamed, you bolted as far away from the pack as you could manage.

Your flight took you into human territory, where you skulked in the shadows and hid from the humans until your tribe-sisters caught up with you. You were terrified of them, and never once questioned them when they addressed you in a strange half-wolf tongue (that you somehow understood) and commanded you to come with them. They weren't happy that you'd killed one of their all-too-rare wolfKin, but they took you in all the same.

Thanks to your inborn intelligence, further motivated by your fear of offending these people, you were a quick study, learning your new role in the world with great speed. As you learned more and more about your new people, you started to understand just why you were born different, and that made you more at home. Still, you kept finding things that continued to baffle you. Everyone gets to breed — is *expected* to breed — not just the alphas? Some humans deserved to be protected and others didn't? The elders encouraged you to keep asking questions — it was good for your Ragabash nature, they claimed. Even so, that felt uncomfortably like a challenge to you. And you don't really feel like it's your place to challenge your packmates and septmates — at least, not in the usual way.

Concept: You learned omega behavior from your time in the woods, and now it's conflicting with your relations with other Garou. Your instinct tells you to defer to wolves that show more confidence than you, and that sometimes means you wind up displaying submissive behavior to males — something that infuriates your sisters in the tribe. However, your Ragabash sensibilities are starting to show through, and you're starting to realize that your behavior might do more than irritate your sisters — it might make them think about their defiance of wolf rules of dominance and submission.

Roleplaying Notes: You appear more wolf than werewolf, and your omega behavior puts some homids in mind of dogs. Act apologetic if your packmates seem tense or otherwise irritated, to the point of licking their mouths if they just won't settle down. Roll over at the blink of an eye, especially if there are any other Furies present. And if someone starts getting really irritated with your submissive behavior, ask them why — and make sure you get an answer that you're satisfied with.

Equipment: Bundle of donated human clothes, not much else

Black Furies™

Name: | Player: | Chronicle:
Breed: Lupus | Auspice: Ragabash | Kuklos:
Pack Name: | Pack Totem: | Concept: Omega Female

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●●●●○	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledges	
Alertness	●○○○○	Animal Ken	●●●○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	●○○○○	Crafts	○○○○○	Enigmas	●○○○○
Brawl	●○○○○	Drive	○○○○○	Investigation	●●○○○
Dodge	●●●○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	●○○○○	Firearms	○○○○○	Linguistics	●○○○○
Expression	●●○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Primal-Urge	●○○○○	Performance	●○○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Stealth	●●○○○	Rituals	●○○○○
Subterfuge	●●●○○	Survival	●●●○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Backgrounds		Gifts	Gifts
Mentor	●○○○○	Hare's Leap	
Pure Breed	●○○○○	Scent of Running Water	
Rites	●○○○○	Heightened Senses	
Totem	●●○○○	Blur of the Milky Eye	
	○○○○○		

Renown: Glory ○○○○○○○○○○ Honor ●○○○○○○○○○ Wisdom ●●○○○○○○○○
Rank:
Rage: ●○○○○○○○○○
Gnosis: ●●●●●○○○○○
Willpower: ●●●●○○○○○○

Health:

Bruised		☐
Hurt	-1	☐
Injured	-1	☐
Wounded	-2	☐
Mauled	-2	☐
Crippled	-5	☐
Incapacitated		☐

Tribal Weakness: -1 DIFFICULTY TO FRENZY WHEN PROVOKED BY MEN

Computer Witch

Quote: *Phear my l33t skillz, bizatch!*

Prelude: They say suburbia's no place for a defender of the Wyld to grow up, but it's not like you can choose your parents. Your mom insisted on taking you on the occasional wilderness retreat or whatever latest "all-natural" fad she was pursuing, but she never had the willpower to give up her television and A/C for long. Your dad was worse — actually, "better," to your point of view. He loved his technological toys, and used his comfortable salary to purchase all the latest gadgets while they were still cutting-edge and expensive. When you started showing an interest in how things like VCRs and computers worked, Mom didn't approve, but Dad encouraged you. When it turned out you had a knack for that sort of thing, there was no way he'd hear of taking your gear away or pulling you out of computer classes.

Of course, there was nothing like the Internet to both attract and repulse you. It opened up infinite possibilities — and revolted you with the incessant shilling of porn, piracy and other cheap gratification. You began a love/hate relationship with the 'net, absorbing all the great information they had online and hacking the hell out of the sites that you found to be over-the-top.

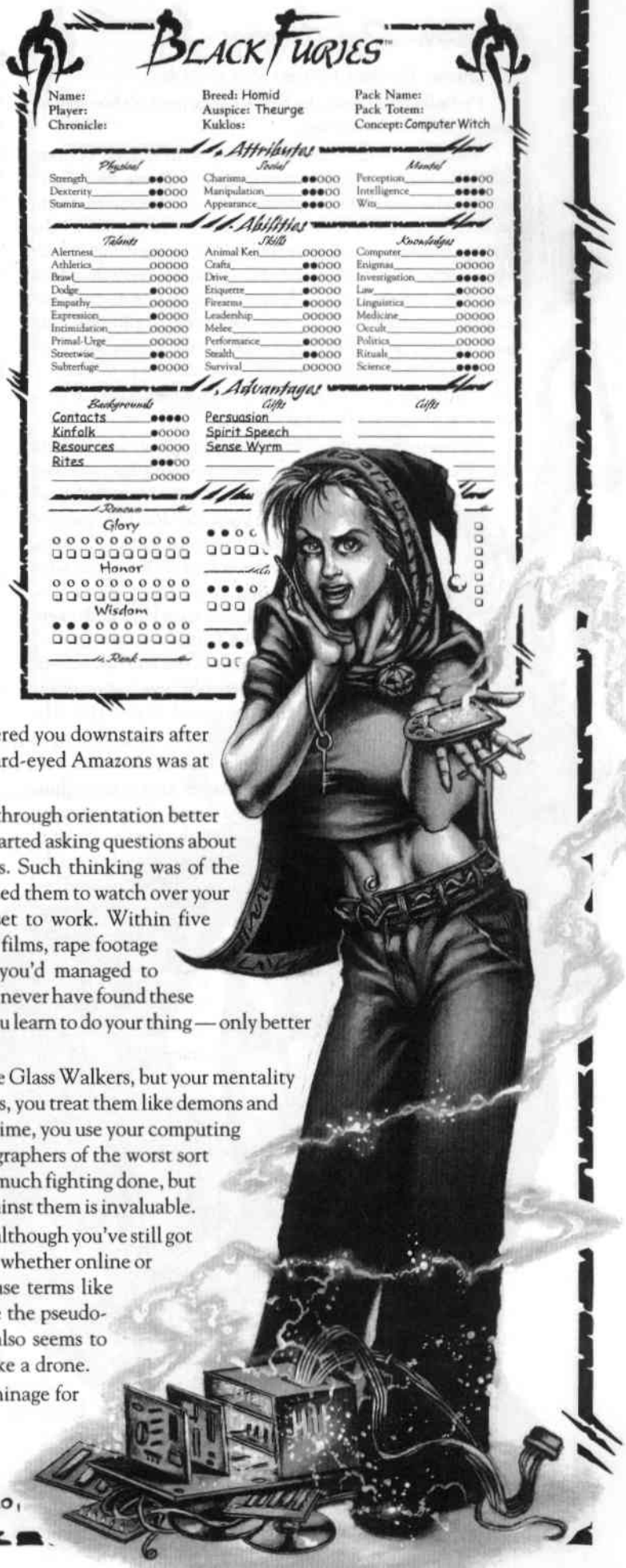
Your First Change came during a late-nighter, when you found a link to a bondage site that went too far. You lost your patience, your temper, and your entire computer setup before you knew what was going on. Your folks ushered you downstairs after the fit, made a couple of calls, and before long a knot of hard-eyed Amazons was at your doorstep.

You'd always been a clever and tough kid, so you went through orientation better than most. But the elders were frankly appalled when you started asking questions about spirit technology and using it to attack Woman's enemies. Such thinking was of the Weaver, the Enemy, they said. In your defense, you convinced them to watch over your shoulder as you booted up a coffeehouse computer and set to work. Within five minutes, you'd shown them six websites that dealt in snuff films, rape footage from the Balkans and other atrocities. Within twenty, you'd managed to wrangle street addresses. Once you'd pointed out that they'd never have found these places on their own, the elders gave in and started helping you learn to do your thing — only better than ever before.

Concept: You're a hacker that would do well among the Glass Walkers, but your mentality is all Fury. Where the Walkers treat computer-spirits as allies, you treat them like demons and djinn that must be bound to do your bidding. In your spare time, you use your computing skills, both natural and spiritual, to track down web pornographers of the worst sort and other sex offenders. During "work hours," you don't get much fighting done, but your insight into using the Weaver and Wyrm's methods against them is invaluable.

Roleplaying Notes: You're elite through and through, although you've still got things to learn. Act brassy and unafraid to speak your mind, whether online or in person. Indulge yourself in a little techno-mysticism; use terms like "hex" and "sending" and "virtual pentagram" to emphasize the pseudo-sorcery aspect of your work. It rattles your elders, but it also seems to reassure them that you're still thinking like a witch, not like a drone.

Equipment: Backpack, fetish computer, items of chiminage for techno-spirits, Rolodex full of passcodes, portable phone


BLACK FURIES™

Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Breed: Homid
Auspice: Theurge
Kuklos:

Pack Name:
Pack Totem:
Concept: Computer Witch

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○	Intelligence	●●●●○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●●○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledges	
Alertness	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Computer	●●●●○
Athletics	○○○○○	Crafts	●●○○○	Enigmas	○○○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Drive	●●○○○	Investigation	●●●●○
Dodge	●○○○○	Etiquette	●○○○○	Law	●○○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Firearms	●○○○○	Linguistics	●○○○○
Expression	●○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Primal-Urge	○○○○○	Performance	●○○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Streetwise	●●○○○	Stealth	●●○○○	Rituals	●●○○○
Subterfuge	●○○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	●●●○○

Advantages

Backgrounds		Gifts	Gifts
Contacts	●●●●○	Persuasion	
Kinfolk	●○○○○	Spirit Speech	
Resources	●○○○○	Sense Wyrm	
Rites	●●●○○		
	○○○○○		

Renown

Glory

Honor

Wisdom

Rank

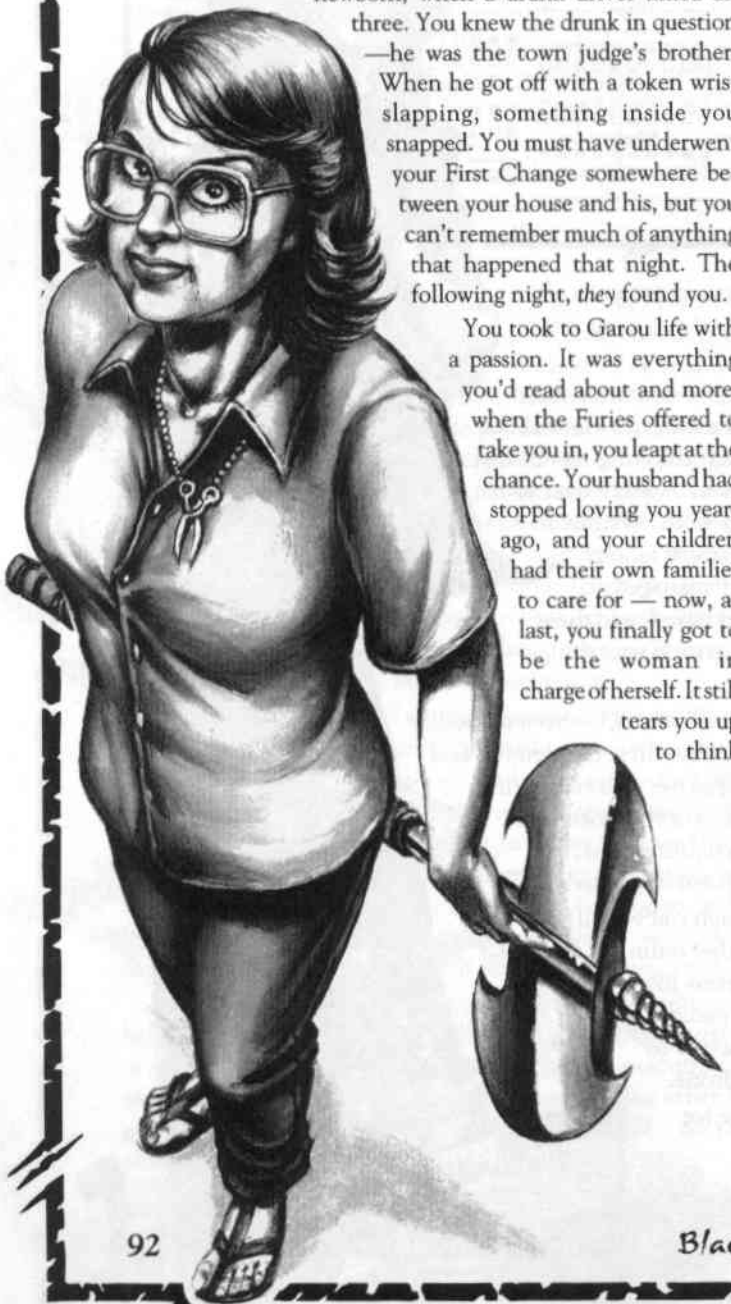
Modern-Day Atropos

Quote: *Too late for prayers now, sonny-boy.*

Prelude: Sometimes the First Change just isn't fair. In your case, it came far, far too late.

You grew up in a dead-end town, with limited options. Your folks wouldn't let you go to college because they didn't figure you needed that kind of education. You got married right out of high school; it wasn't the kind of romance that set the world on fire, but you honestly couldn't see yourself doing much better. Particularly in this kind of town, where every third man was either a wife-beater, an adulterer or borderline suicidal; and folks turned a blind eye, because "everyone's feeling the pain since the work left." Your only release was the weekly trip to the library. You read about anthropology, sociology, folklore; it wasn't anything you could talk about with your sewing circle — but it was something that was yours.

You were in your fifties when everything truly went to hell. Your youngest was coming to visit, bringing his wife and newborn, when a drunk driver killed all three. You knew the drunk in question —he was the town judge's brother. When he got off with a token wrist slapping, something inside you snapped. You must have underwent your First Change somewhere between your house and his, but you can't remember much of anything that happened that night. The following night, *they* found you.



You took to Garou life with a passion. It was everything you'd read about and more; when the Furies offered to take you in, you leapt at the chance. Your husband had stopped loving you years ago, and your children had their own families to care for — now, at last, you finally got to be the woman in charge of herself. It still tears you up to think of all the years you've wasted — and all the people you could have put a stop to.

It was so stupid, though, hearing of young men and women throwing away their futures, spending so much time and effort punishing the humans they can catch. You felt they shouldn't take risks like that; better that they spend their vigor on the problems that *really* need facing. Besides, it's best not to leave the matter of executing wayward criminals to cubs that are too inexperienced. What's needed is a Crone's hand, one that can hold the scissors steady no matter how much the target whines, screams or pleads.

Snip-snip.

Concept: You definitely have a vigilante mentality, but lacking the wild fervor of a Bacchante or the battle lust of an Amazon of Diana. Instead, you're a cool-hearted woman with the hearth wisdom of the town witch and a heaping helping of insight into the flaws of the human heart. The incest, the abuse, the hatred that lay under the surface of a sleepy little town like your own — you know it's all too typical of every place you visit. Somebody should do something. Thankfully, someone will.

Roleplaying Notes: Your belated First Change has left you with a mild neurosis about your age, leading you to consider yourself more expendable than the Garou that are young enough to be your children (or in some cases, grandchildren!). Put on a brave, laconic exterior to hide your worries; better that the others remember you well. Act almost motherly toward the younger Garou that you deal with; they're the future of the world, and you'd do anything to protect them.

Equipment: Labrys, set of "working clothes," stack of local newspapers, bolt-cutters, innocuous sedan, FBI operations manual

Black Furies

Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Breed: Homid
Auspice: Philodox
Kuklos:

Pack Name:
Pack Totem:
Concept: Modern-Day Atropos

I. Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●●○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●●○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●●○○

II. Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledges	
Alertness	●●○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Crafts	●●○○○	Enigmas	●○○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Drive	●○○○○	Investigation	●●●●○
Dodge	●○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy	●●●○○	Firearms	●○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Expression	●○○○○	Leadership	○○○○○	Medicine	●●○○○
Intimidation	●●●○○	Melee	●○○○○	Occult	○○○○○
Primal-Urge	●○○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Politics	●○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Stealth	●●○○○	Rituals	●○○○○
Subterfuge	●●○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	●○○○○

III. Advantages

Backgrounds		Gifts	Gifts
Allies	●●○○○	Persuasion	
Kinfolk	●○○○○	Truth of Gaia	
Resources	●●○○○	Watchful Eyes	
Rites	●○○○○		
	○○○○○		

Renown: Glory ○○○○○○○○○○ / Honor ●●●○○○○○○○ / Wisdom ○○○○○○○○○○
Rank:

Rage: ●●●○○○○○○○
Gnosis: ●●○○○○○○○○
Willpower: ●●●●●●●○○○

Health:

Bruised		☐
Hurt	-1	☐
Injured	-1	☐
Wounded	-2	☐
Mauled	-2	☐
Crippled	-5	☐
Incapacitated		☐

Tribal Weakness: -1 DIFFICULTY TO FRENZY WHEN PROVOKED BY MEN

Oracle

Quote: *Hear the words of Gaia's dreams, proud child of Stag! Do not set foot on the battlefield without girding thy loins with the armor of wisdom, or else you throw away your life! But wield the weapon anointed for thee, and thy foes will fall as wheat! A great doom lies over thy meeting with the Black Children, and Death waits at thy heels with bared white teeth! Ai! The vision passes... I can see no more....*

Prelude: You found it ironic that you were raised directly by a tribe so devoted to the ideals of motherhood — and you never got to know your mother. The rest of the sept raised you as a distant stepchild; when you asked where *your* mother was, they never said. Gradually you pieced out that she'd been ostracized for the sin of bearing you, and that she'd died on a quest for atonement. Since the rest of the sept couldn't agree whether she'd died without absolution, or whether her death had absolved her, they simply didn't talk about it.

Nonetheless, your foster aunts treated you better than most metis could hope for; in particular, the sept's Mistress of the Rite took some amount of pity on you and began training you in the rites of the Furies. You fetched her materials, helped with rites, and interpreted her ravings when she underwent the rite of Python's Trail. You hoped to be named as her successor, although reality set in soon enough, and one of the sept's up-and-coming Theurges — a non-metis — gained that honor.

You were devastated when your mentor died during a Black Spiral caern raid. To make matters worse, her successor had never liked you, and cut you off from your ritual training. Rather than suffer her jibes, you asked to be permitted to take your skills to another sept, to carry on your mentor's duty as oracle for another group of Garou.

Of course, you'd never learned Python's Trail. But you were damned if you'd let that stop you. You could pick up the rite later; what was important was that you find a way to be useful. Guiding stubborn Garou with "prophecy" seems to work just fine....

Concept: As oracles go, you're basically a fraud. As Galliards go, you're damn good at what you do. You don't need a singing voice to inspire your allies — just a little bit of misdirection. When people come to you looking for omens, you tell them not necessarily what they *want* to hear, but what they *need* to hear — you inspire them to do their utmost by making up little fibs about what is "written in the bones of the Earth." It may not be the most honorable way to get the job done, but if it serves the greater purpose, who cares?

Roleplaying Notes: When you're not actively called on to soothsay, play the role of the quiet, withdrawn metis who defers to her more outgoing peers. When intoning your "prophecies," use more formal language and modulate your voice to a deeper pitch, improving the illusion that something else is speaking through you. Couch your statements in suitably vague terms and leave ample room for misinterpretation; save the "definite" prophecies for when you know your target so well that there's no other way he could act.

Equipment: Bowl of incense, thrice-blessed shroud, ash wand, ritual dagger

Soldier of Our Merciful Mother

Quote: *Hail Mary, full of grace. Hear the prayer of this warrior who kneels before you. Bless me, sacred Mother, in my battle, and forgive me for the blood I must spill. Have mercy on the souls I free from their corrupt bodies. Amen.*

Prelude: Your childhood could have been a lot worse than it was, if it wasn't for your family's faith. You grew up among a virtual litter — eight brothers and sisters, all vying for your folks' attention, the pick of any treats and the best sleeping arrangements. God only knows what sort of trouble the lot of you might have gotten into if it wasn't for your grandmother. Like some queen dowager, she kept the law in the household, providing discipline and praise when your parents were too busy working to do the same. She seemed to pulse with an inner strength, a strength she always credited to her faith in God.

Remarkably, it worked. You and your siblings could be real hellions during the week, but you all lined up, dressed nicely and behaved when Sunday came along. You all wanted to impress your grandmother, but you felt that way more than anyone. You studied hard in Sunday school, enthralled by the way the Bible was filled with stories of miracles of compassion and brutal tales of ancient justice (or vengeance) alike. And, following your grandmother's advice, you began living your life according to the principles you read there. Of course, that meant sometimes you turned the other cheek and sometimes you played "Judith and Holofernes" if your brothers were giving you too much grief — but things never got too serious. Well... things never got too serious with your family.

You got your first taste of *real* trouble in high school, on the way home from the junior prom. Your boyfriend had been a real gentleman for most of the evening, but once he parked the car, he started to show another face entirely. He started going off about "waiting too long" and "you know you *really* want this" — and when you realized that the word "no" just wasn't working, something inside you decided to get more persuasive. You were later told that your tribe sisters had to crash the car and set it on fire to destroy the evidence of what you did to him.

Through it all, though, you bore up with remarkable resilience. You're sorry for killing your boyfriend, and you've done a great deal of penance to atone for it — but you never succumbed to believing it was your fault that he attacked you, or that your life was "a lie." Your faith sustained you through your Rite of Passage, and it wasn't long at all before the Order of Our Merciful Mother recruited you. They understood your beliefs, and in turn they helped you understand the ramifications of your full-moon nature. They told you that in a battle for the soul of the world, what the world needed most were more warriors with faith. You couldn't agree more.

Concept: You're a highly devout Catholic who has held onto her faith since her First Change, albeit with some modifications. You practice a blend of human theology and Gaian teachings, much like other Furies in your camp. The Rage is too strong within you for you to join an actual religious order, but you reconcile that by telling yourself that God and Gaia made you the way you are so that you could do Their work. You do battle so that others don't have to. However, there's more than a few touches of the Old Testament in your anger; you firmly believe the old saw about an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

Roleplaying Notes: It's very important to you that you represent your camp well; it's not a popular one among most Furies. Be moderate of word and deed when away from the battlefield. Don't take sole credit for your deeds; stress that God and Gaia have a hand in your every victory. Praise God, but never forget to praise Gaia as well — and vice versa. It's important that you lead by example, particularly in matters of humility — the Garou Nation and your own tribe have both suffered enough on account of pride.

Equipment: Rosary, durable clothing, Colt M1911A, gym bag with spare clothes and ammunition, well-worn New American Bible, neatly pressed Sunday dress

BLACK FURIES™

Name:
Player:
Chronicle:

Breed: Homid
Auspice: Ahroun
Kuklos: Order of our Merciful Mother

Pack Name:
Pack Totem:
Concept: Soldier of our Merciful Mother

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●●○○○	Intelligence	●●○○○
Stamina	●●●●○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledges	
Alertness	●●○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	●●○○○	Crafts	●○○○○	Enigmas	●●○○○
Brawl	●●○○○	Drive	●●○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●●○○○	Etiquette	●○○○○	Law	●○○○○
Empathy	●○○○○	Firearms	●●○○○	Linguistics	●●○○○
Expression	○○○○○	Leadership	●○○○○	Medicine	○○○○
Intimidation	●○○○○	Melee	●●○○○	Occult	○○○
Primal-Urge	●●○○○	Performance	○○○○○	Politics	○○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	●○○○○	Rituals	○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	

Advantages

Backgrounds		Gifts	Gift
Ancestors	●○○○○	Master of Fire	
Contacts	●○○○○	Falling Touch	
Mentor	●●●○○	Sense Wyrm	
Resources	●●○○○		
Totem	●○○○○		

Renown

Glory ●●○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○
Honor ●○○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○
Wisdom ○○○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○

Rank

Rage ●●●●●●○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○

Gnosis ●●○○○○○○○○ ○○○○○○○○○○

Willpower ●●●●●●●●○○ ○○○○○○○○○○

Health

Bruised		☐
Hurt	-1	☐
Injured	-1	☐
Wounded	-2	☐
Mauled	-2	☐
Crippled	-5	☐
Incapacitated		☐

Tribal Weakness

-1 DIFFICULTY TO FRENZY WHEN PROVOKED BY MEN

Heroines

Leukippes

Though the First Daughters occupy the greatest place in the hearts of their descendants, one of the most esteemed of ancient Fury heroes wasn't a Greek at all. She was the Scythian warrior Leukippes, an Amazon of the steppes who earned her glory through her battle prowess and guile alike.

The Scythians had no qualms about teaching their women to fight, and Leukippes proved an apt pupil. Like all her people, men and women alike, she learned the use of the bow, and was a superb archer by the time of her First Change. She was said to be able to keep pace with a horseman while running on two legs, and could outfight any other werewolf that ran with the Scythians. It was no surprise that she rose to a position of leadership, commanding a pack of fierce Fury warriors — in all ways the very picture of what the Greeks thought of when they thought of Amazons.

The deeds of Leukippes are many. She is said to have joined with her people and the Medes when the two nations conquered Nineveh and overthrew the Assyrian Empire; tales say that her pack slew many Assyrian soldiers to get to the officers that enraged them. She allegedly ventured into Egypt, there to war against the vampires and corrupt Fera she found there. But she is most renowned for confronting and slaying the Apollonian priest Kamisos, one of the first powerful agents of the Wyrm.

The tales do not agree on Kamisos' exact nature; some say he was a powerful sorcerer, others that he was Kinfolk. Most retellings credit him with the ability to slay with a gaze, and a few stories say that he had greater powers. His actual allegiance to Apollo is certainly in question, and the Furies say it was all a sham. But by all accounts, Kamisos was a man of unearthly beauty — and the priest was leading a crusade against the wolf-folk of Greece. He had joined forces with the Dionysian priesthood, and together they attracted many followers. He taught the hunters among his throng to bear silver, and to slay any wolf they found. Augmented by the priest's supernatural powers, they killed a number of Furies before Leukippes and her warriors arrived.

Rather than attack directly, Leukippes wisely counseled her pack to disguise themselves as local converts, and they covertly joined one of the priest's revels. Their clever approach brought them close to Kamisos without alerting his guards, and Leukippes herself drew within arm's reach of the demented cultist by entrancing him with dance. Thus she and her pack were able to slay Kamisos, rout his followers

and put the fear of the Furies back into his flock with only a single casualty.

To this day, Leukippes is revered as one of the first Furies who fought against the Wyrm's forces hidden in the guise of smothering patriarchal religion. Her tale is recounted as a warning for young cubs to see that religion as a tool against Woman has more to do with the people involved than the religions themselves. She is also one of the few object lessons acknowledged by the Amazons of Diana; even they must admit that subtlety is sometimes for the best when confronted with the tale of Leukippes.

Guilietta Hidden Road

The present-day rivalry between the Sisterhood and the Order of Our Merciful Mother is somewhat ironic, considering that each group considers Guilietta Hidden Road one of their greatest heroes. During the days of the Inquisition, this cunning Ragabash did as much as, or more than, any of her tribemates to smuggle Fury Kin — and the Kin of other tribes — to safety.

Much of Guilietta's childhood remains unknown. She was apparently born into a wealthy Italian household, one with ancient ties to the Fury bloodlines.

Several tales of her exploits make a point of mentioning that other Garou were struck by Guilietta's "incontestable purity" — which, in a Fury context, likely refers to her breeding rather than virginity or piety. According to most accounts, her First Change came while she was making a pilgrimage, and Guilietta was so horrified by the carnage she'd wrought that she retreated into a convent. From there, the narrative loses track of her activities, although she was apparently in contact with other Furies during this time. When the Inquisition began to spread beyond Spain, Guilietta reemerged, and by this point she was apparently in full control of the many gifts of her heritage — and more besides.

Guilietta had apparently risen to the rank of Mother Superior, or at least to a similar level (many Furies refuse to recount her rank in the Christian church at all). Although this meant little in terms of actual authority, it nonetheless gained her a few audiences with ranking church officials, where she apparently used her great persuasive tactics (which is to say, a number of Gifts) to misdirect the occasional witch-hunt.

However, Guilietta did most of her actual work in person. She charmed jailers to sleep and whisked away prisoners; she saw to the disappearance of several witch-finders who were "taken by bandits"; she quelled rumors of witchcraft in entire villages, confusing the Inquisitors who later arrived. She was particularly quick to act in areas known to have a high Kin population, and many a Fianna, Silver Fang and Warder pledged himself in her debt when she smuggled their relatives to safety.

Eventually, Guilietta saw that merely denying the Inquisition of victims wasn't enough. Zealous churchmen refused to let the witches elude them — or, more importantly, refused to let their colleagues believe that the witches were eluding them. As the charges of witchcraft became more and more flimsy, simply to fill quotas, Guilietta decided to take action of a different sort. If the Inquisition needed victims, she reasoned, then why not give them victims of a proper sort? With that, she began directing the witch-hunts more carefully, drawing them to the haunts of vampires and caern-raiding sorcerers rather than villages of Kin. She quietly taught the Inquisitors of her acquaintance to use fire against vampires, and how to find them in their sleep. The rest was history.

Guilietta's actions made her a pivotal figure in the formation of the Sisterhood, although she never devoted her attention solely to that camp; her membership in the Order of Our Merciful Mother meant too much to her. Some tales say she died chaste, choosing to save the children of others rather than bear and protect her own. But to this day, it's said that the Garou never suffered so much from the Inquisition as did the Leeches or the warlocks — and Guilietta Hidden Road is one of those that the werewolves have to thank for that.

Electra Shieldmaiden

Electra Stavrakis grew up in an interesting time for women. She was a teenager during the '60s, although her South Carolina home wasn't quite as receptive to some of the ideas that came floating around like "free love" and recreational drug use. She was in her 20s when ERA became an issue, and her belated First Change came during a notably violent demonstration for women's rights. Naturally, once she was brought into the Black Furies, she felt at home for the first time in her life.

Although Electra wound up involved in more pressing affairs than political activism, she remained very conscious of the way in which a cause could grow and spread — or gutter and die out — all thanks to whether or not it had powerful speakers to champion its ideals. This observation colored her growth as a Galliard, making her all the more interested in serving

her auspice role by spreading the word about important causes from sept to sept and among humans as well.

She met with several successes in her home territory, but had yet to be truly satisfied that she'd done all she could do. Then she began hearing the tales of the war for the Amazon. The desperate battle for one of the last Wyld places, the need to stress the importance of this war to the other Garou — it was the cause she'd been seeking. She began researching as much as she could about the mundane factors involved in the deforestation of the Amazon Basin, and when she was certain she had enough information, she headed for the rainforest. Her intention was nothing less than making sure all the Garou involved in the struggle down there knew everything they needed to — and learning every victory, every lesson the war had to offer, so that nothing would go forgotten.

To date, Electra has had limited success in her mission. She has taken command of a pack of scouts and watchers who gather information for her, and that are free to operate as they please (so long as they don't interfere with the combat troops). She has managed to open cordial relations with many of the natives on both sides of the operation, and she has already relayed the tales of many fallen heroes back to the rest of the world. However, there remains so much to be done, and so much opposition, that she despairs of the Garou's ability to win the war — or even pull off a draw.

Most recently, Electra has established secret and very limited contact with the Balam of the Amazon Basin. These werecats noted her ability to gain the trust of their Kin, and decided that she would be as good a contact among the werewolves as they could find. The proud werejaguars have treated her with very little respect, but have agreed to assist her if she in exchange sways Golgol to abdicate leadership in favor of someone more agreeable to the werecats — one way or another. Electra is now at the crossroads of a very difficult choice — either she forfeits a potential ally in the form of the Balam, or she tries to undermine the leadership of the werewolf who is possibly the only one strong enough to coordinate the Garou war effort in the Amazon. And she doesn't have long to decide....

Image: Electra is in her 50s, but looks to be in her early 40s at most. She stands nearly six feet tall, and her close-cropped black hair has only a few touches of silver. She is in excellent fighting condition, and her Crinos form is an impressive deep black, signifying her Pure Breed. She dresses according to the occasion — khakis for a trip through the rainforest, fatigues for battle, ceremonial shift for moot affairs.

Roleplaying Notes: You're of two minds about the choice before you; yes, you dislike Golgol and would probably prefer even the company of a werecat to the elder Get, but you must admit that his leadership abilities have so far been the only thing holding the fractious tribes together down here. The decision is eating at you, for you know you must choose soon. Living up to this bargain would interfere with the task of recording the war effort, your stated purpose for being here at all — but so would fending off the cats, if your refusal offends them. You wish you knew what to do; it seems you might just have to guess.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Galliard

Rank: 4 (Athro)

Physical: Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 3 (3/4/5/5), Stamina 4 (6/7/7/6)

Social: Charisma 4, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 2 (1/0/2/2)

Mental: Perception 3, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 3, Athletics 3, Brawl 3, Dodge 2, Empathy 1, Expression 4, Intimidation 2, Primal-Urge 2, Streetwise 2, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Animal Ken 1, Crafts 2, Drive 2, Etiquette 3, Leadership 3, Melee 3, Performance 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Knowledges: Enigmas 2, Investigation 2, Law 1, Linguistics 2, Medicine 2, Occult 3, Politics 4, Rituals 3, Science 2

Backgrounds: Allies 2, Contacts 2, Kinfolk 1, Pure Breed 4

Rage: 5; **Gnosis:** 6; **Willpower:** 6

Gifts: (1) Beast Speech, Call of the Wyld, Heightened Senses, Inspiration, Mindspeak, Persuasion, Sense Wyrm; (2) Call of the Wyrm, Curse of Aeolus, Dreamspeak, Sense of the Prey, Staredown; (3) Disquiet, Eye of the Cobra, Flames of Hestia, Song of Rage; (4) Bridge Walker, Shadows by the Firelight

Rites: Electra knows all minor rites and rites of accord and renown. She also knows the Moot Rite, Rite of the Opened Caern, Gathering for the Departed, Rite of the Questing Stone, Rite of Summoning, Rite of Talisman Dedication, Rite of Ostracism, Stone of Scorn, Voice of the Jackal, The Hunt, Satire Rite and Soothe the Scars.

Mari Cabrah

Although surprisingly young for her lofty rank, Mari Cabrah is one of the most dynamic up-and-comers in the Black Furies. In her thirty years, she has traveled across four continents, torn apart Black Spiral Dancers, communed with the avatar of her totem, quested through almost every Umbral Realm, and helped in the retrieval of one of the greatest Silver Fang artifacts known to the Garou Nation.

Mari was born and raised in New York, where she had a less than happy childhood. The events leading up to her First Change were decidedly traumatic, or at least so her packmates assume — Mari doesn't talk about her life before becoming a Black Fury, ever. She started out as something of a vigilante, with a particular vengeance against sexual predators. Eventually, her tribal elders tried to cool her off by assigning her to a pack, the Guardian Rage. However, the pack eventually fell apart, leaving Mari further embittered and returning to her solo operations. It was during this time that she met and challenged the exiled Silver Fang Jonas Albrecht, then a "lone wolf" like herself, and lost. She still carries the scars from that encounter, although she says that her grudge has ended.

As fate would have it, though, she hadn't seen the last of Albrecht. The two wound up working together — very much against their will — to protect a young Lost Cub who was apparently of great significance. The omens were correct. The youngster, Evan Heals-the-Past, wound up making a tenuous peace between the two, and joining them to work as a pack.

Although the three never chose an official pack name — Albrecht and Mari found the idea too stuffy for them — they have nonetheless achieved much together, including the recovery of the lost Silver Crown and Albrecht's elevation to the throne. Mari took exceptional pleasure in their war on the Seventh Generation, and perhaps killed more of the Defiler-cultists than any other Garou that followed their crusade.

These days, Mari continues to assist her packmates when the need arises, although she prefers to refrain from being "joined at the hip" with them. She has found herself in something of a rivalry with Kula Wiseblood, another East Coast Fury vigilante who is her equal in rank and prowess. Kula accuses Mari of being "too soft," thanks to her associations with Evan Heals-the-Past, a noted moderate. Mari suspects the rivalry has its roots in tribe politics rather than vigilante philosophy, but doesn't consider it a problem worth pursuing — yet.

Although her deeds have easily earned her the prestige to lead a sept of her own, Mari prefers to remain out of the leadership role. She still defers to Alani Astarte, leader of the New York Furies, in tribal matters — that is, when she involves herself in tribal affairs. Most of her time not spent with her pack is devoted to her human charges and her territory back in

New York City, an indulgence that her tribe-sisters are willing to allow her. After all, she's earned the right.

However, being associated with her packmate Jonas Albrecht's meteoric rise from exile to kingship has led many to underestimate Mari, presuming her the "Fury sidekick" or worse in their relationship. This hasn't helped her relations with emissaries from other septs, at least those that wind up with minor injuries after being too patronizing to "King Albrecht's right-hand attack bitch." But if there's a silver lining, it's that Black Spiral Dancers and other enemies of the Nation sometimes do the same — and they find that Mari isn't at all the "weak link" holding Albrecht back. If you asked her, she'd tell you it was the other way around.

Image: Mari is of mixed Hispanic and Italian descent, which shows through in her dark hair and eyes. Although she's attractive, it's not at all in a "soft" or "pretty" way; her body is corded muscle without a trace of extraneous body fat, her scars are evident whenever she wears short sleeves, and her face almost never softens into a smile. She wears clothes that she can fight in, usually a tank top and military fatigue pants. Her Crinos and Hispo forms are black with large white markings on her face and midsection (she becomes mostly black in Lupus), and when wearing these forms she quivers with Rage.

Roleplaying Notes: You've suffered in the past because people stronger than you abused that strength. No more. You constantly test your physical limits, remaining in the best possible shape you can be. You refuse to show other people any sign of weakness; even your own packmates get the cold shoulder now and again. The only exception is a small child; you can be awfully protective of children, in a big sister sort of way. Nonetheless, you've got no time to nurture; the end is practically in sight, and you're damned if you go down any other way than with your teeth in the Wyrm's throat.

Breed: Homid

Auspice: Theurge

Rank: 5 (Elder)

Physical: Strength 3 (5/7/6/4), Dexterity 4 (4/5/6/6), Stamina 5 (7/8/8/7)

Social: Charisma 3, Manipulation 3 (2/0/0/0), Appearance 3 (2/0/3/3)

Mental: Perception 4, Intelligence 3, Wits 3

Talents: Alertness 4, Athletics 3, Brawl 5, Dodge 4, Empathy 1, Intimidation 3, Primal-Urge 3, Streetwise 3, Subterfuge 1

Skills: Animal Ken 2, Crafts 2, Drive 3, Etiquette 1, Firearms 3, Leadership 1, Melee 3, Stealth 4, Survival 3

Knowledges: Computer 1, Enigmas 4, Investigation 2, Law 2, Linguistics 2, Medicine 3, Occult 4, Politics 2, Rituals 5, Science 1

Backgrounds: Contacts 4, Pure Breed 2, Resources 2

Rage: 7; **Gnosis:** 8; **Willpower:** 9

Gifts: (1) Heightened Senses, Mother's Touch, Persuasion, Razor Claws, Sense Wyrm, Smell of Man, Spirit Speech, Watchful Eyes; (2) Command Spirit, Curse of Aeolus, Jam Technology, Kali's Tongue, Name the Spirit, Sense of the Prey, Sight from Beyond, Spirit of the Fray, Staredown; (3) Coup de Grace, Exorcism, Pulse of the Invisible, Visceral Agony; (4) Body Wrack, Grasp the Beyond, Spirit Ward, Wasp Talons; (5) Feral Lobotomy, Wyld Warp

Rites: Mari is a Rank Five Theurge. If she doesn't already know a given rite, she knows where she can find someone to teach it to her should the need for it arise (excepting the tribe-specific rites of non-Furies, of course).

The Manslayer

Not all "heroes of the tribe" make their sisters proud. Some of them are killers so bloody and terrible that they inspire as much loathing as admiration from their tribe. One such infamous person is the murderous "vigilante" who has come to be known as the Manslayer. To the Bacchantes, this enigmatic figure is an extremist — to most of the rest of the tribe, she's no longer a warrior, but somewhere between mass murderer and serial killer.

The "Manslayer" sobriquet was actually coined by a pack of Glass Walkers. The pack was dedicated to monitoring the media for signs of Garou violence that might need to be covered up. In the course of serving their pack function, they uncovered a string of hideously bloody murders that the FBI was tentatively linking together. The Glass Walkers did some digging, and were astonished to find that the FBI had only part of the story — some hundred and fifty men had been murdered in a variety of ways, with the number still growing. Worse, many of the victims had apparently no link to Wyrmish activities at all — those guilty of little more than attending a strip club were torn apart as readily as the truly guilty. The Walker pack's most potent Theurge couldn't determine anything more about the culprit's identity than "she is a child of Pegasus" — news that the pack didn't want to hear.

For the Furies' part, the majority of the tribe is heavily embarrassed by the Manslayer's activities, particularly as the Glass Walkers' spiritual research produced the decree "*is* a child of Pegasus" — not "*was*." Those Furies who have tried to gain further information from Pegasus have met with stony si-

lence. Regrettably, many are taking this silence as evidence that Pegasus sanctions the Manslayer's activities — a position that does nothing to improve the Furies' relations with other tribes who have heard of the Manslayer's hunts.

Currently, the tribe is involved in a low-key investigation (the Furies are, for obvious reasons, opposed to witch-hunts) to determine the actual identity of the Manslayer. The most popular rumor going around is that she was Alecto Bloody-Handed, one of the foremost Bacchantes before her disappearance on a crusade against a Black Spiral Hive. If Alecto was captured by the Dancers, as her *kuklos* fears, the torments and violations she would surely have suffered might well have pushed her over the edge, even after her escape. Other theories abound as well; she might have been a potent warrior who faked her own death, or who was abandoned for dead on the battlefield, or simply a Fury on the brink who fell prey to an overpowering bloodlust rather than Harano. Many Furies argue that she must be caught, and rendered unto Erebus or otherwise healed; others feel she should be executed for abusing the Furies' sacred mission, a gesture that might also appease the other tribes. It's an argument that causes no small amount of bitterness between the two sides.

Of course, the Manslayer hasn't been caught yet — and those involved in tracking her down are no closer to catching her than before. If she is indeed deranged, it's not an illness that clouds her ability to cover her tracks. The more moderate Furies fear that she has allies throughout the tribe, and perhaps through other tribes as well; the worst urban legends about cannibalistic Bone Gnawers, unhinged Children of Gaia and blasphemous Silent Striders imply that the most vicious Garou might find sympathizers. Indeed, there might not be only one "Manslayer"; it's very possible that the sobriquet was adopted by a pack or even an extended network of extremist Furies, who disguise their work as that of a single renegade to avoid retribution. If that's the case, then the chances of stopping the Manslayer's brutal killing spree are slim indeed.

Black Furies™

Name:	**Breed:**	**Pack Name:**
Player:	**Auspice:**	**Pack Totem:**
Chronicle:	**Kuklos:**	**Concept:**

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●OOOO
Dexterity ●OOOO
Stamina ●OOOO

Social

Charisma ●OOOO
Manipulation ●OOOO
Appearance ●OOOO

Mental

Perception ●OOOO
Intelligence ●OOOO
Wits ●OOOO

Abilities

Talents

Alertness OOOOO
Athletics OOOOO
Brawl OOOOO
Dodge OOOOO
Empathy OOOOO
Expression OOOOO
Intimidation OOOOO
Primal-Urge OOOOO
Streetwise OOOOO
Subterfuge OOOOO

Skills

Animal Ken OOOOO
Crafts OOOOO
Drive OOOOO
Etiquette OOOOO
Firearms OOOOO
Leadership OOOOO
Melee OOOOO
Performance OOOOO
Stealth OOOOO
Survival OOOOO

Knowledges

Computer OOOOO
Enigmas OOOOO
Investigation OOOOO
Law OOOOO
Linguistics OOOOO
Medicine OOOOO
Occult OOOOO
Politics OOOOO
Rituals OOOOO
Science OOOOO

Advantages

Backgrounds

OOOOO
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OOOOO

Gifts

Gifts

Renown

Glory
O O O O O O O O O O
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Honor
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Wisdom
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Rank

Rage

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Gnosis

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Willpower

O O O O O O O O O O
❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑ ❑

Health

Bruised		❑
Hurt	-1	❑
Injured	-1	❑
Wounded	-2	❑
Mauled	-2	❑
Crippled	-5	❑
Incapacitated		❑

Tribal Weakness

-1 DIFFICULTY TO FRENZY WHEN PROVOKED BY MEN

Black Furies™

Homid	Glabro	Crinos	Hispo	Lupus
No Change	Strength (+2)____ Stamina (+2)____ Appearance (-1)____ Manipulation (-2)____	Strength (+4)____ Dexterity (+1)____ Stamina (+3)____ Appearance 0 Manipulation (-3)____	Strength (+3)____ Dexterity (+2)____ Stamina (+3)____ Manipulation (-3)____ +1 Die to Bite Damage	Strength (+1)____ Dexterity (+2)____ Stamina (+2)____ Manipulation (-3)____ -2 Perception Diff.
Difficulty: 6	Difficulty: 7	Difficulty: 6	Difficulty: 7	Difficulty: 6

INCITE DELIRIUM IN HUMANS

Other Traits

_____ OOOOO
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Fetishes

Item:_____ Level____ Gnosis____
Power:_____
Item:_____ Level____ Gnosis____
Power:_____
Item:_____ Level____ Gnosis____
Power:_____
Item:_____ Level____ Gnosis____
Power:_____

Rites

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Combat

Maneuver/Weapon	Roll	Difficulty	Damage	Range	Rate	Clip

Brawling Chart

Maneuver	Roll	Diff	Damage
Bite	Dex+Brawl	5	Strength+1/A
Body Tackle	Dex+Brawl	7	Special/B
Claw	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength+1/A
Grapple	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength/B
Kick	Dex+Brawl	7	Strength+1/B
Punch	Dex+Brawl	6	Strength/B

A=Aggravated Damage
B=Bashing Damage

Armor:_____

Black Furies™

Nature: **Demeanor:**

Merits & Flaws

Merit	Type	Cost	Flaw	Type	Bonus

Expanded Background

Allies

Mentor

Ancestors

Pure Breed

Contacts

Resources

Kinfolk

Totem

Possessions

Gear (Carried):

Equipment (Owned):

Experience

TOTAL:

Gained From:

TOTAL SPENT:

Spent On:

Sept

Name:

Caern Location:

Level: Type:

Totem:

Leader:

Black Furies™

History

Prelude

Description

Age:_____
Hair:_____
Eyes:_____
Race:_____
Nationality:_____
Sex:_____

	Height	Weight
Homid:		
Glabro:		
Crinos:		
Hispo:		
Lupus:		

*Age Role:*_____
*Battle Scars:*_____
*Moth's Deformity:*_____

Visuals

Pack Chart

Character Sketch

TRIBEBOOK:
BLACK FURIES™

My Sister's Keeper

Since the dawn of civilization, the Black Furies have been a tightly-knit sisterhood, united by bonds of blood, spirituality and conviction. They are the guardians of the Wyld, the champions of women, the wrath of Gaia. They consistently produce some of the greatest warriors and wisest mystics known to the Garou Nation. But as the Final Days draw to a close, the Furies find themselves beset on all sides and, worse, fractured by strife from within. Will this proud sisterhood be able to endure the challenges facing them?

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